5
Delicious in Dungeon
RYOKO KUI

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Ryoko Kui

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5

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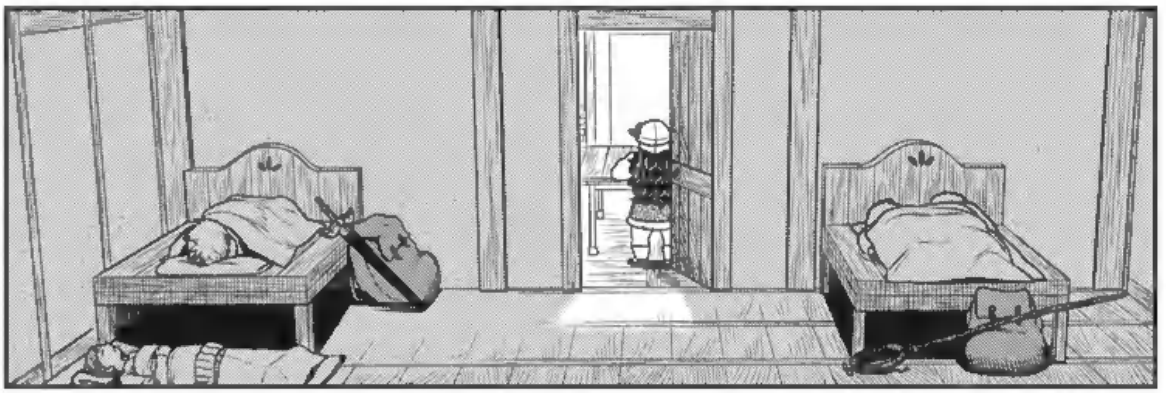
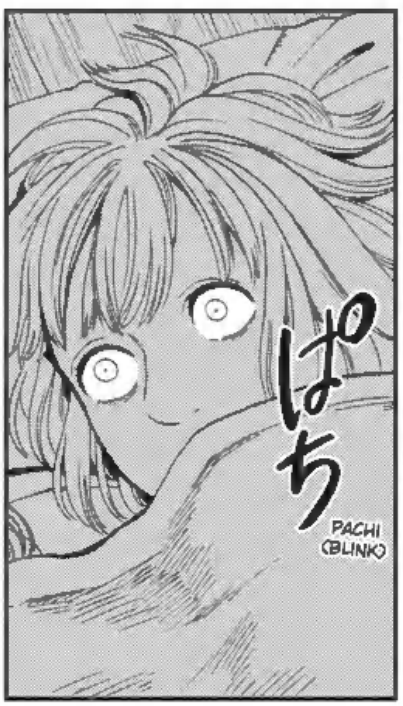
26. Red Dragon VII

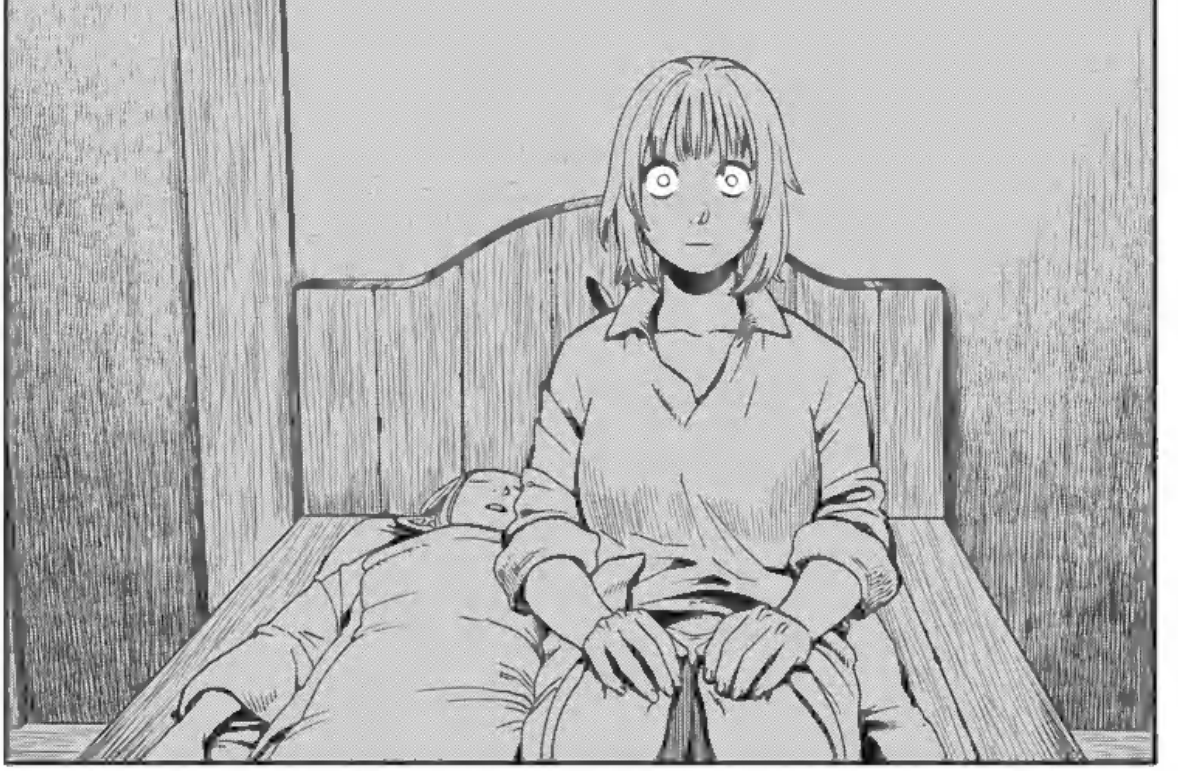
...NO MATTER HOW I PROCESS IT, WE'LL NEVER EAT IT ALL...
BONELESS DRAGON HAMS
Red dragon thigh meat—2 kg
Seasonings——To taste

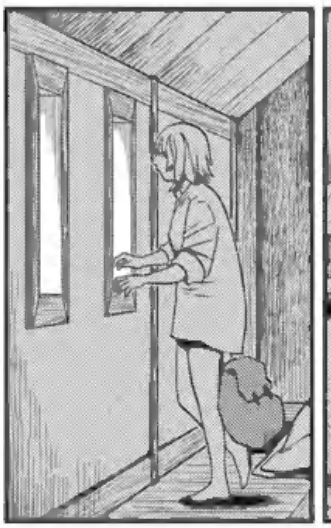
PHEW.

クル
KURU (WRAP)

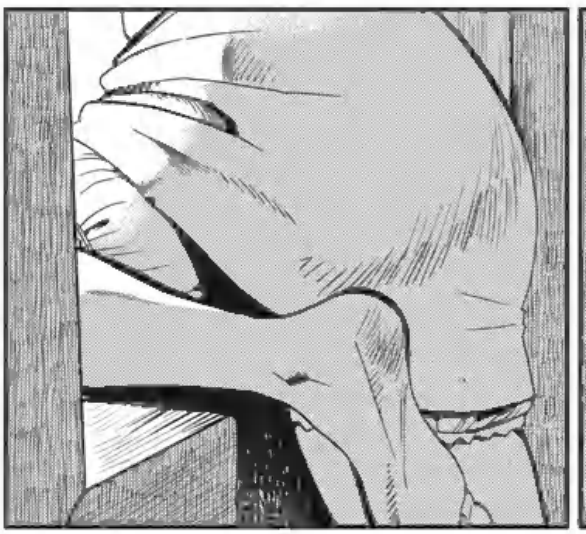


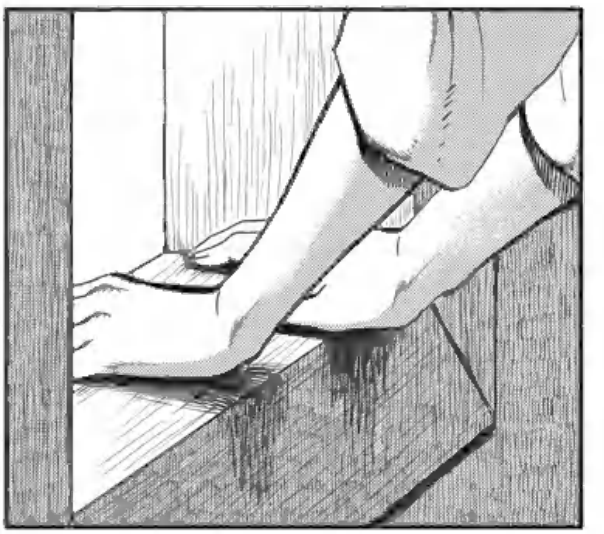

ぱち
PACHI (BLINK)





MOZO
(RUSTLE)
もぞ





HISO
(WHISPER)
ヒソ
HISO
ヒソ

FURA
(STAGGER)
フラ
FURA
フラ

BA
CYANKO
バッ

GYUU
(SQUEEZE)
ギュう
GUI
(TUG)
ぐい

.....
.....

YOU WERE TASKED WITH SEARCHING FOR HIS MAJESTY.
I DON'T RECALL RELIEVING YOU OF YOUR DUTY.

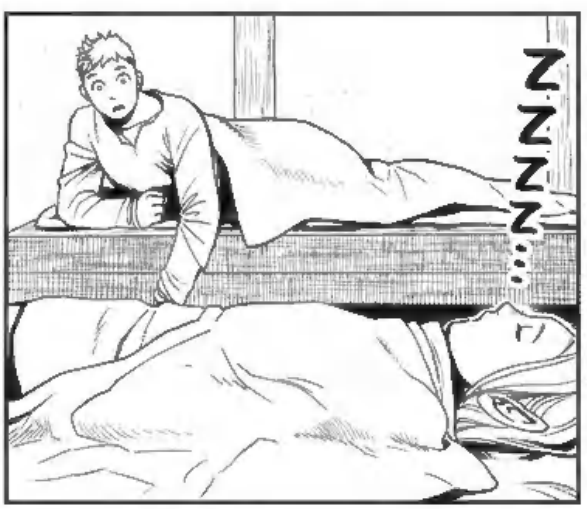
SO THERE YOU ARE, HM?
WHAT DO YOU CALL THAT FORM ?

PETAN (FWUMP)
ぺたん

THE SWORD WAS PROPPED UP, AND I GUESS IT FELL OVER.
HAAH...
TIE THAT THING UP ALREADY.

...WHAT WAS THAT?

ガタン
GATAN (CLATTER)
ビク
BIKU (FLINCH)


ZZZZ...

WHEW...

HUH?

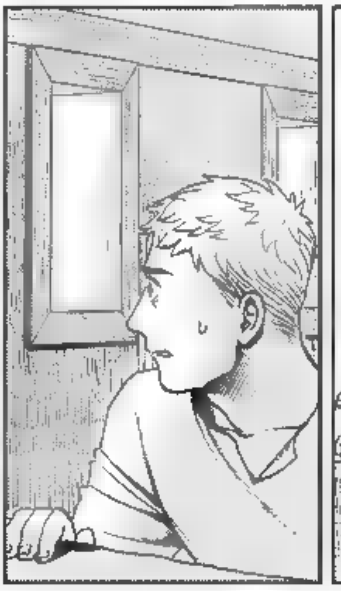
MARCILLE, WHERE'S FALIN?

FALIN?

?
NOBODY CAME THROUGH HERE.

SENSHI, WHERE DID FALIN GO?

SHE CAN'T HAVE...
DID SHE LEAVE THROUGH HERE...?

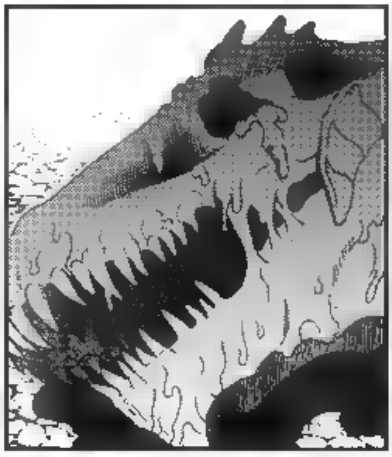


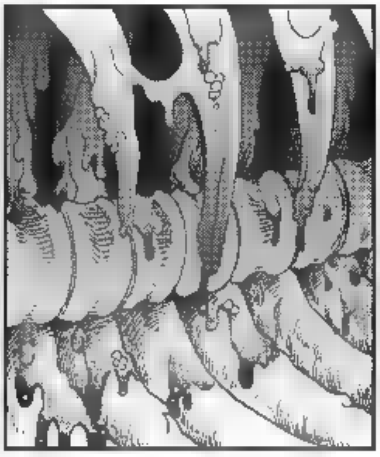
WHAT...? WHAT'S WRONG?

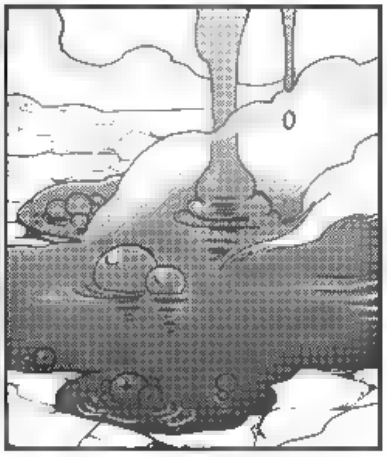
BA (DASH)
LAIOS!

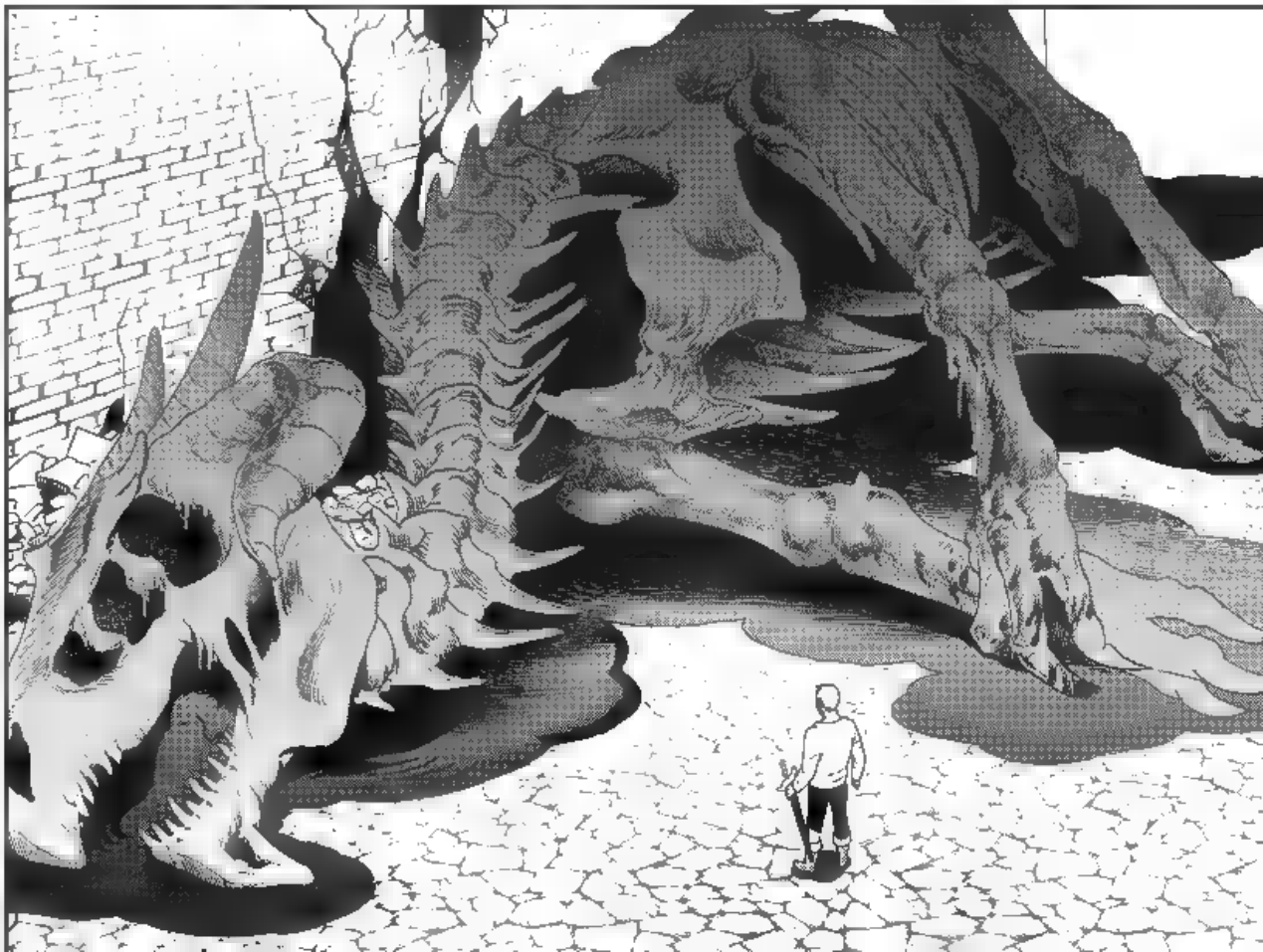
...I'M GOING OUT TO LOOK FOR HER!
GU (GRAB)

GHK!









FALIN!
WHAT'S THIS...?
KATA (RATTLE)
ARE YOU OKAY?
UNH...
GOTO (THNK)
WHAT ON EARTH HAPPENED?
"DELGAL"?
WHO'S...?
BUTSU
LORD DELGAL...
HAVE TO SEARCH...
BUTSU (MUTTER)

ビクッ
BIKU (FLINCH)
IN THIS LAND...

EVERYTHING IS THE PERSONAL PROPERTY OF HIS MAJESTY, KING DELGAL.
...DOWN TO EVERY GRAIN OF SAND UNDER YOUR FEET...
IN THIS LAND, ALL BUILDINGS, COINS, CITIZENS, LIVESTOCK, BLOOD, AND FLESH...

YOU...

YOU FILTHY THIEF.

YOU... THE LORD OF THE DUNGEON...

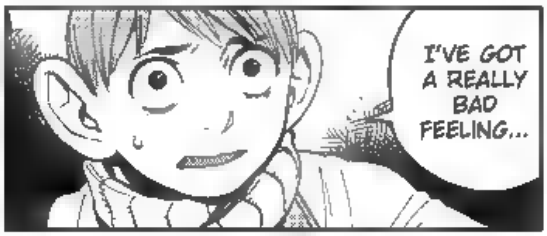
THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN !!

BASHAN (SPLOOSH)
PAAN (BLAM)
THE NEXT ONE WILL HIT YOU!
Y-YOU THERE! GET BACK!
A CHILD !?
.....
KNOW YOUR PLACE...!

—SHUT UP!!
GUA (LUNGE)
YUGA (SHAKE)
FALIN, CAN YOU STAND?
NNH...
FALIN!
DOSHA (FWUMP)
DO (WHUD)
WHAT'S GOING ON?
IS SHE AN ADVEN-TURER?
WHAT STRENGTH!
L-LAIOS!

HM!?
PIKU (TWITCH)
A BOOK!?

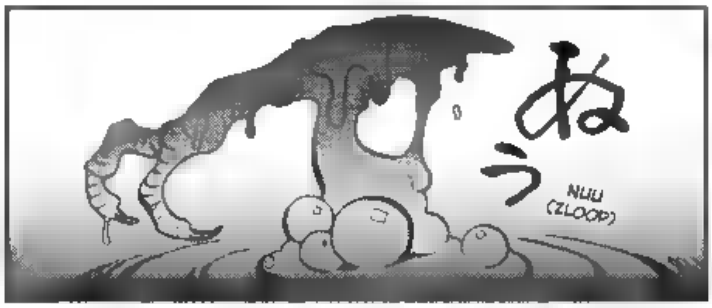
BA (SWAP)


I'VE GOT A REALLY BAD FEELING...

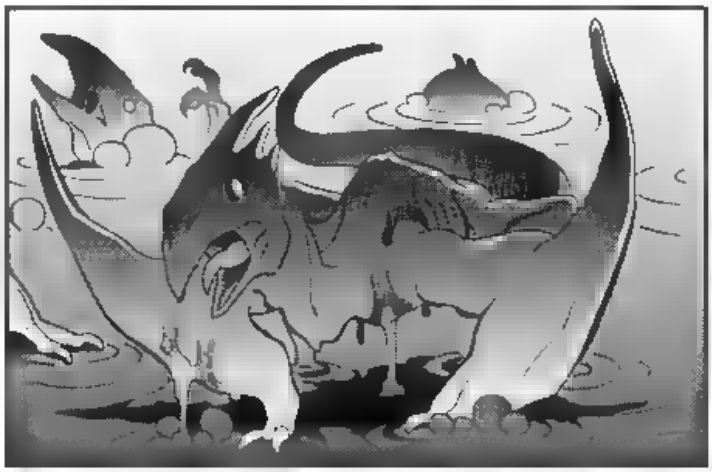
PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, LAIOS.

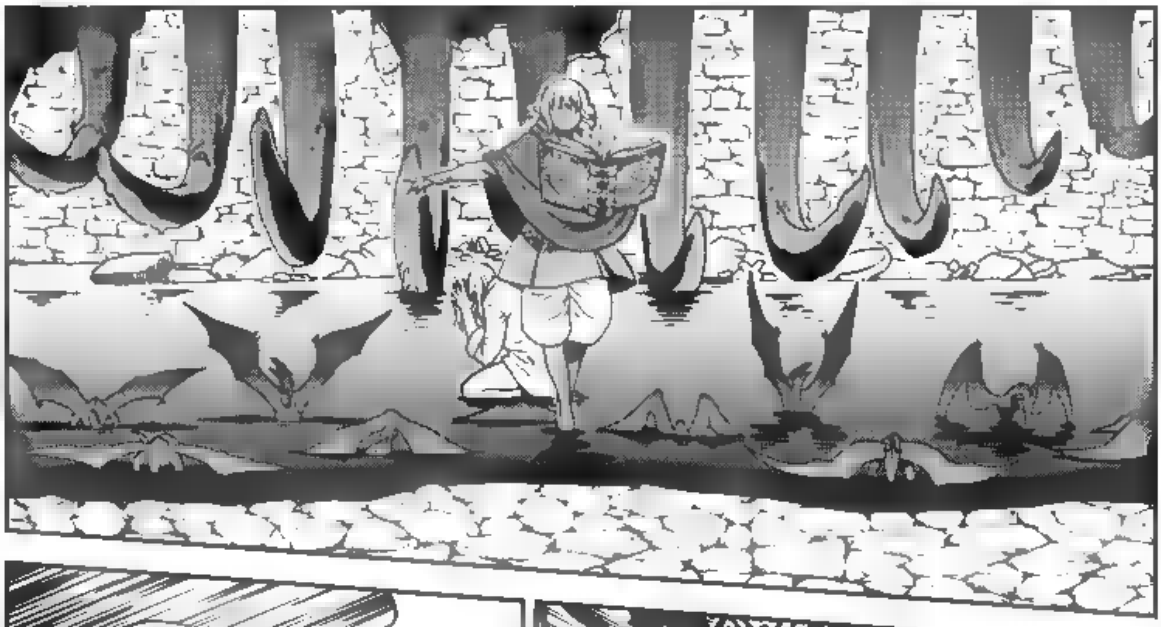
ZOWA (SHIVER)
ANCIENT MAGIC.

HEY. SHE'S CASTING SOME-THING.
HMMM !?
THAT CHANT...


ぬう
NUU
(ZLOOP)

ゴポッ!!
GOPO
(BLUP)



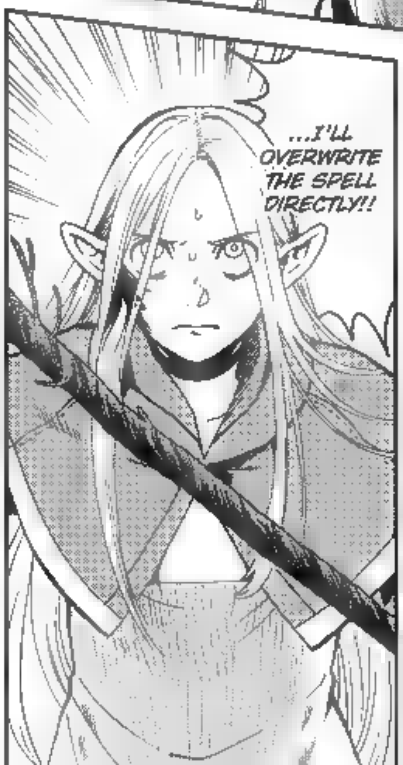


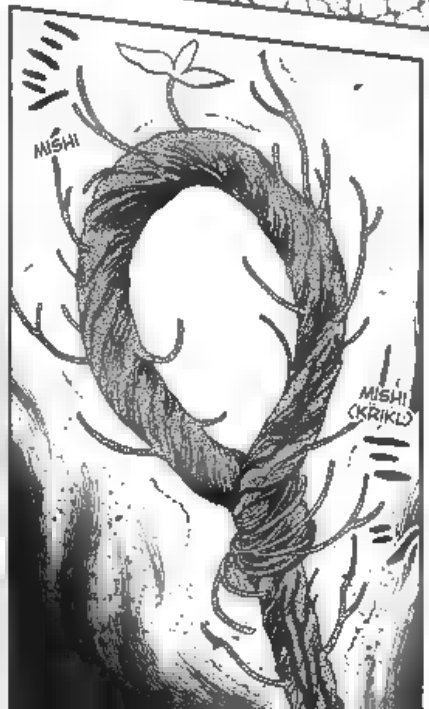
HUH
!?

BA
DEVOUR
THEM!!

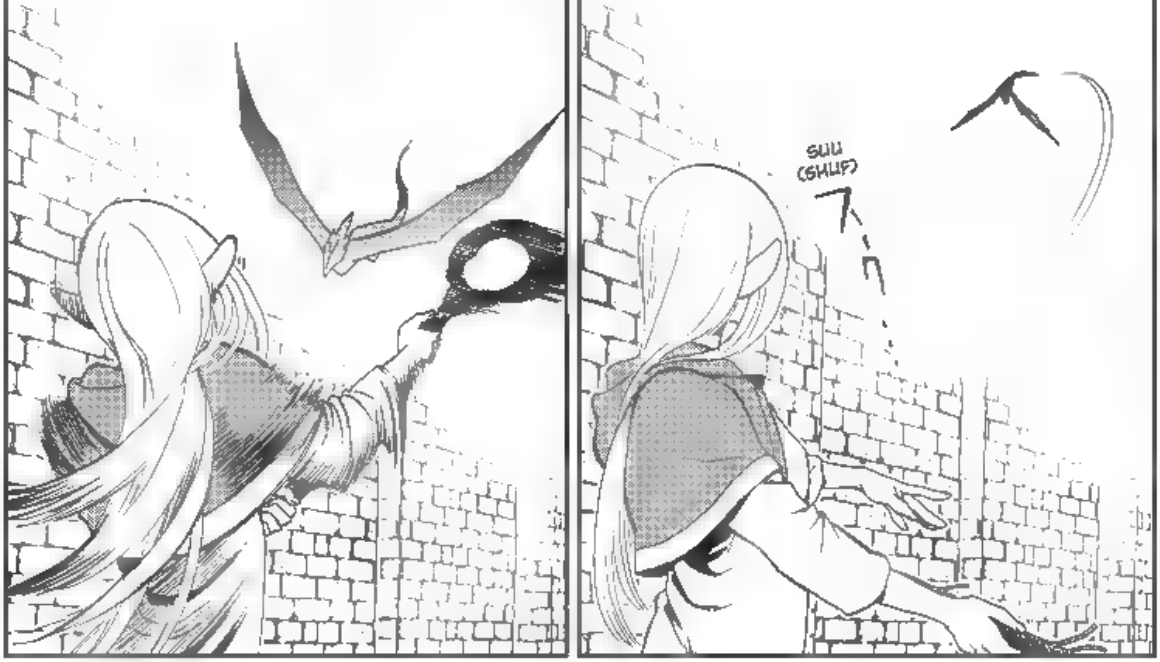
DOSHA (WHUMP)
BI (SNIK)
AH!

IN THAT CASE...
GUI (WIPE)
EXPLO-SIVE SPELLS.
DEFENSE SPELLS...
NO. THOSE WON'T BLOCK THEM.


...I'LL OVERWRITE THE SPELL DIRECTLY!!


MISHI
MISHI (KRIKL)

GYUJI (SQUEEZE)


SUU
(SHUF)

BISH!
BISH!
(KSHH)

BISHA
(SPLISH)
RELEASE!!
PASHAA
(SPLAAASH)

PIKU
(TWITCH)

RE-
LEASE
!!!

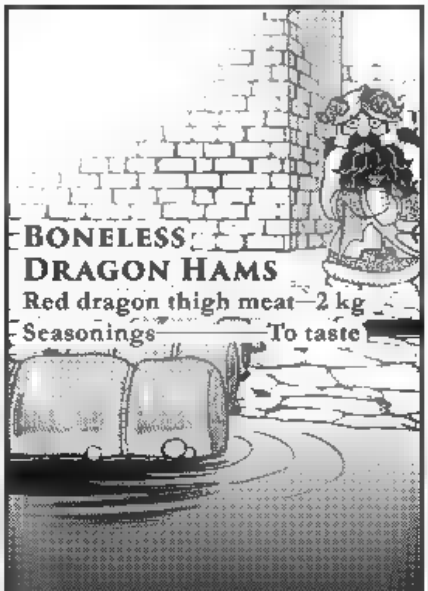
RE-
LEASE!

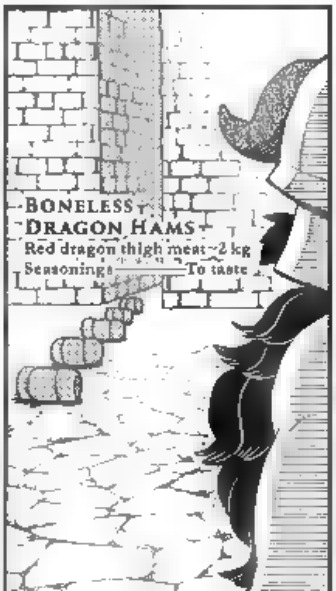
RE-
LEASE!

HH!
HEE-HEE!
BUT
...
...I
CAN'T
KEEP UP
WITH IT!!

PA
THIS
ANCIENT
MAGIC...
I
UNDER-
STAND
IT! I CAN
READ
IT!
PA

PA
(POP)
YEEEG
...!
PA
PA


BONELESS
DRAGON HAMS
Red dragon thigh meat—2 kg
Seasonings——To taste

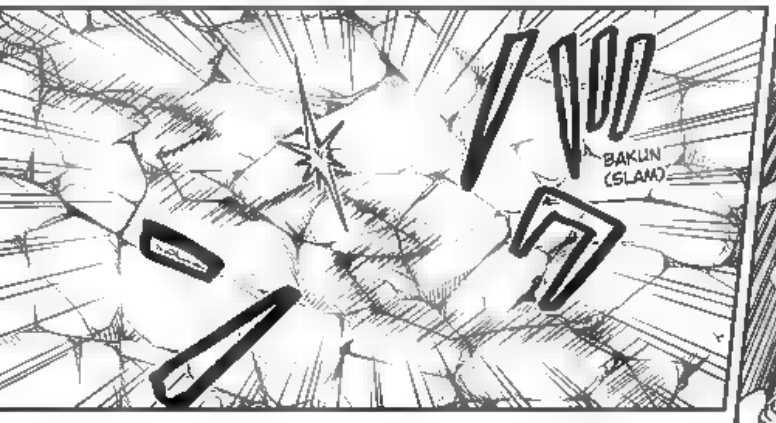

BONELESS
DRAGON HAMS
Red dragon thigh meat—2 kg
Seasonings——To taste

GURA (LURCH)

HFF...
Y-YOU MADE THIS DUNGEON ...?
I...
HFF...
...WANT TO TALK TO Y—

HAGK!
HAFF!

GAPAA (GAPE)
HUH!?


BAKUN (SLAM)

WAAAH!!

PATAN (SHUT)
HMPH.

SU (SWISH)
SETTLE DOWN.
THE REBELS ARE GONE.

.....

.....

HIS MAJESTY WILL RETURN SOON TOO.
NIKO (SMILE)
WHEN HE DOES, LET'S HAVE A GRAND CELEBRATION.

I'LL GIVE YOU A NEW SHAPE.
THAT'S INCON-VENIENT, ISN'T IT?

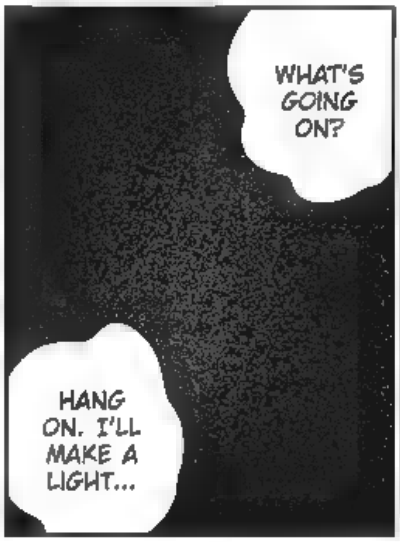
ビク
BIKU (FLINCH)
HEY.
DRAGON.

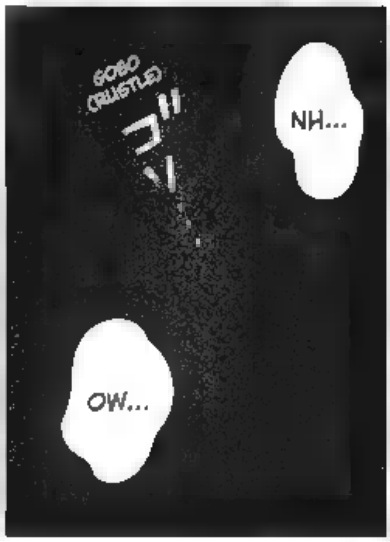
BOKO (BLORP)
ボコ
ボコ
BOKO

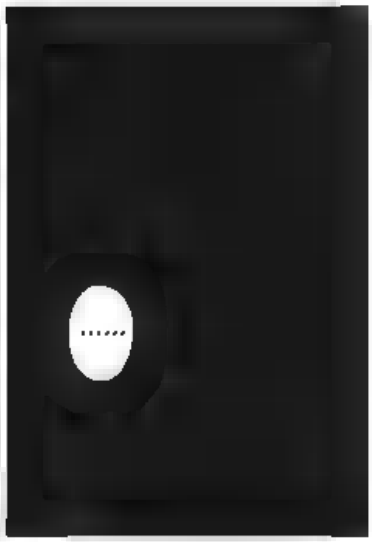
BOKOKO (BLURBLE)
ボココ

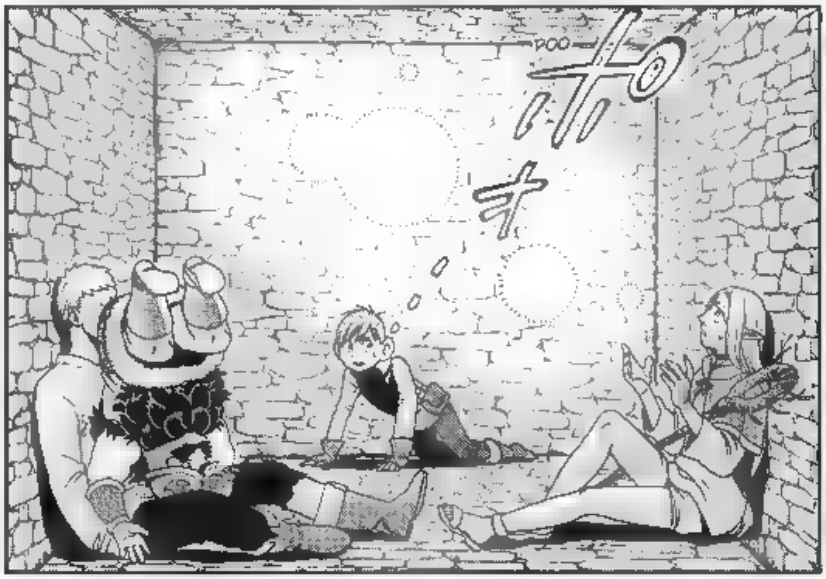
.....
I WILL...

CARRY OUT YOUR DUTY.

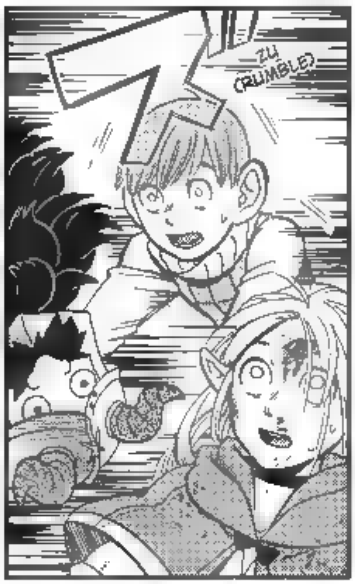

WHAT'S GOING ON?
HANG ON. I'LL MAKE A LIGHT...

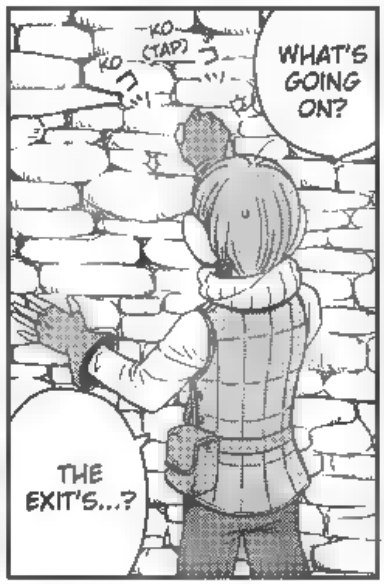

GOBO (RUSTLE)
NH...
OW...


.....


POO

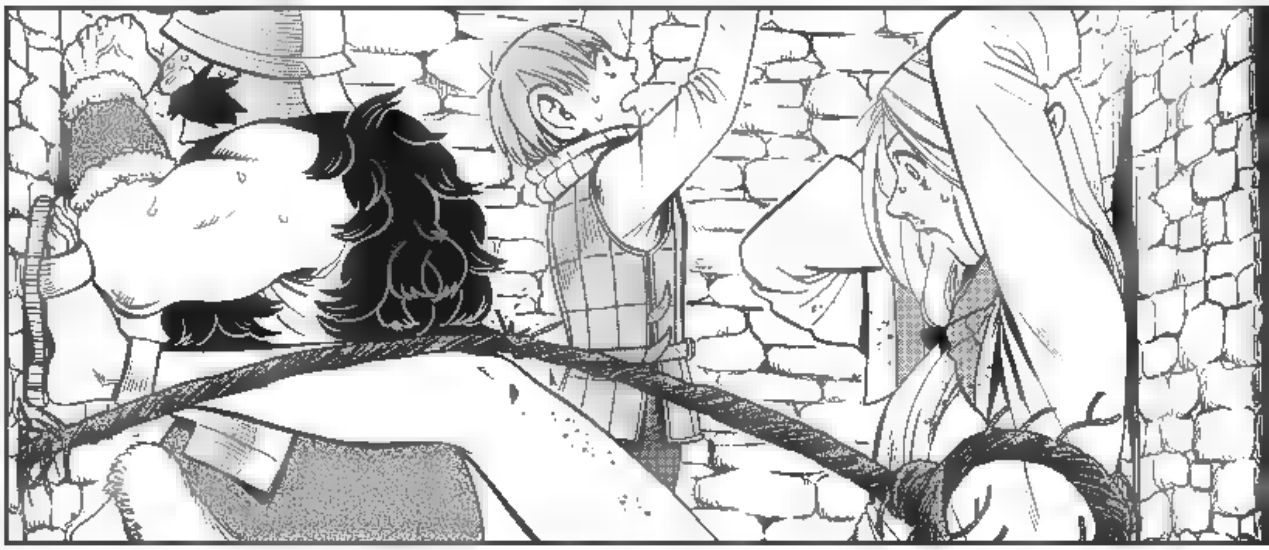
PO (GLEAM)
PO

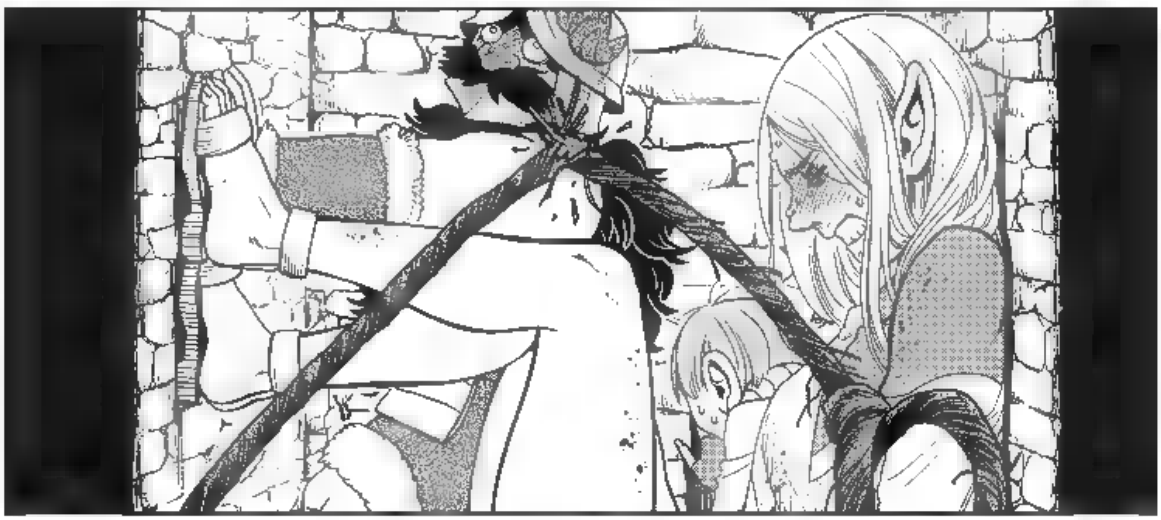

ZU (RUMBLE)


KO (TAP)
KO
WHAT'S GOING ON?
THE EXIT'S...?

WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
WHERE DID WE FALL IN FROM...?

HUH? I THINK THE WALLS ARE CLOSING IN!!
YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING! DAMMIT!
WHAT IS THAT!?
WAAH !?
CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING WITH MAGIC!?
WHAT KIND OF MAGIC, EXACTLY !?
EXIT! FIND AN EXIT!!

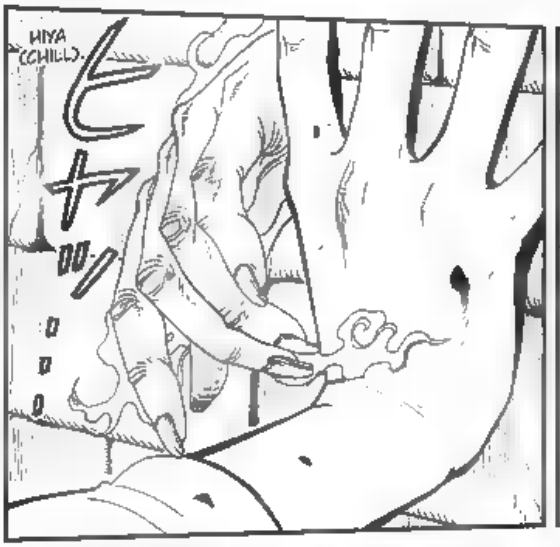


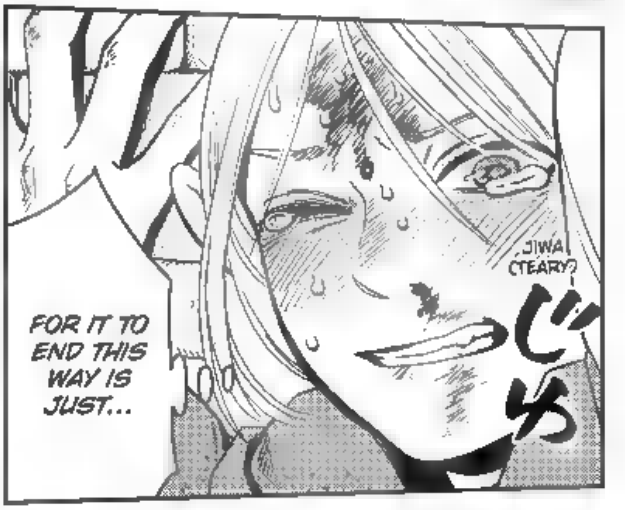


WE FINALLY FOUND FALIN.
I WAS SO CLOSE TO THE DUN-GEON'S MYSTERY.
...AND NOW IT WON'T MEAN A THING.

IT'S NOT THE FIRST TIME, BUT...
...NOBODY WILL FIND US IF WE'RE BURIED IN ROCK.

SO (SHIVER)
WE'RE GOING TO DIE.


HIYA (CHILL)


FOR IT TO END THIS WAY IS JUST...
JIWA (TEARY)

GU (CLAMP)
MMPH!!

HUH...?

SUPPON (POP)
MMPH !!?
MARCILLE !?
WE DON'T KNOW WHERE IT GOES.
ANYTHING'S BETTER [redacted] FLATTENED!!
JUST GO! HURRY!
I-IT'S A CAVE!!
WE CAN GET OUT THAT WAY!
ZUN (THOOM)

BOFU (FWUMP)

F-FOR NOW, WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE.

WHERE ARE WE?
...IT'S COLD!

.....
.....
CHIRA (GLANCE)
UNH...?

...GH!
DOKI (BADMP)
ドキ

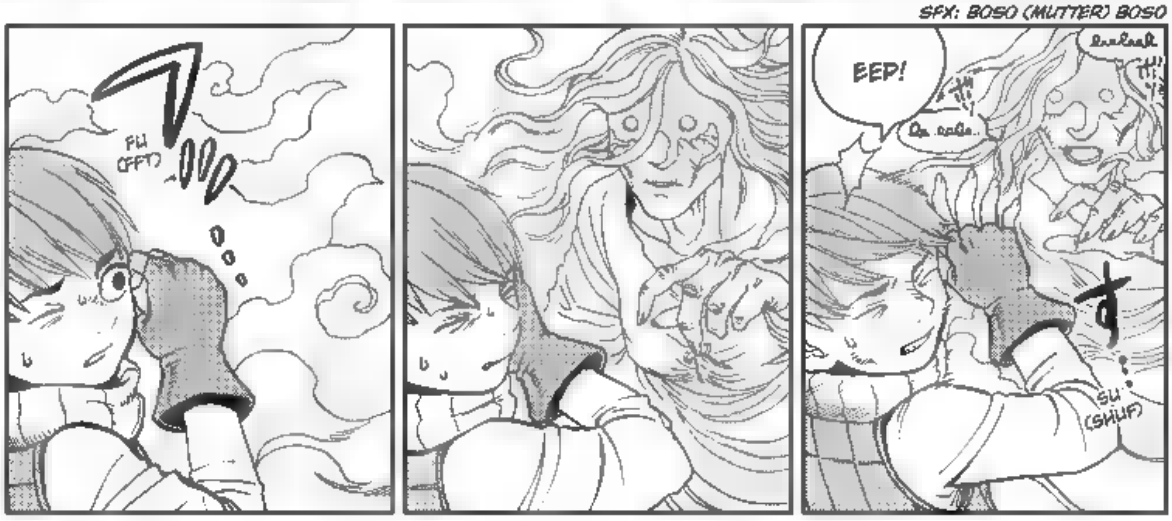
NO, TRY HARDER.
IF SHE FINDS US AGAIN...

...CAN'T.
I CAN'T BOOVE A VINGER EDDY BORE...

IT'S...
IT'S ALL OVER.

30. Good Medicine

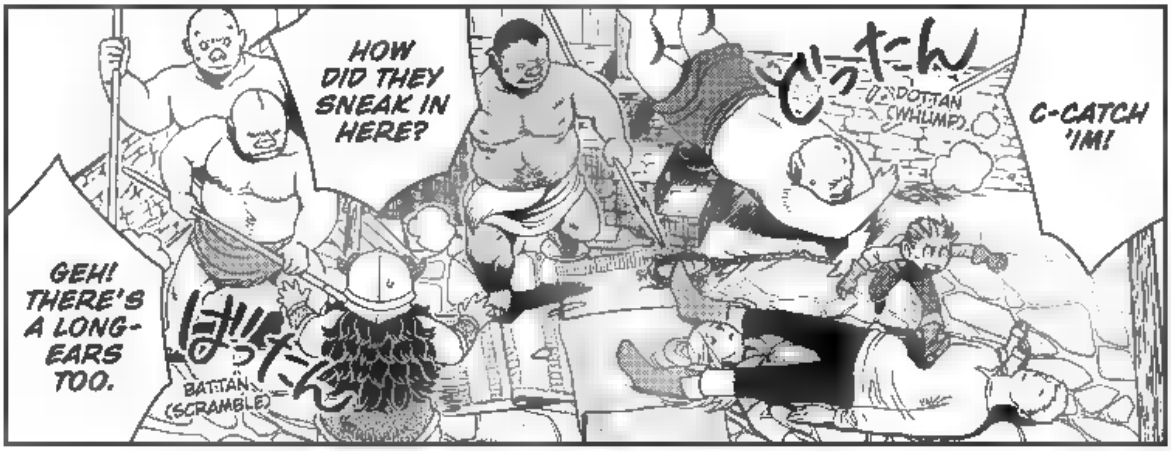
SFX: BOSO (MUTTER) BOSO

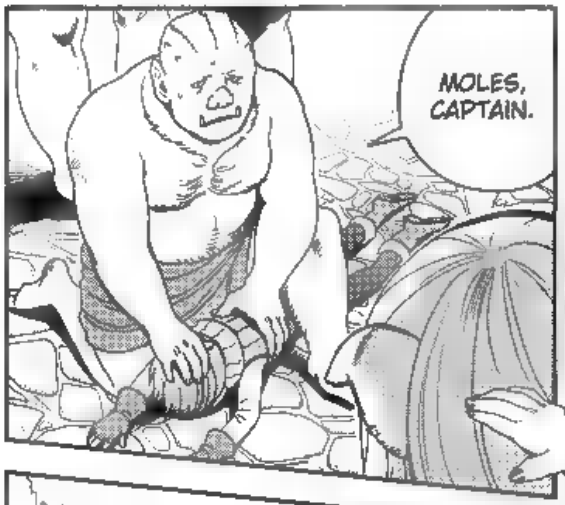


GIII (CREAK)
キィ…

UWAAAAH!!?

EEEEEEEK!!


HOW DID THEY SNEAK IN HERE?
C-CATCH 'IM!
GEH! THERE'S A LONG-EARS TOO.
BATTAN (SCRAMBLE)
DOTTAN (WHUMP)


MOLES, CAPTAIN.

QUIET DOWN!
WHAT'S GOING ON!?

HOW DID THEY GET IN?
WHAT WERE THE GUARDS DOING?
THE HOLE CLOSED UP.

...A LONG-EARS!

A LONG-LEGS, AND...

A LITTLE MAN.
GWEH!

A DEPTHS-DWELLER.

GIVE THE LITTLE MAN TO THE DOGS.
GRRR...
THEY'RE STARVED FOR ENTERTAIN-MENT.
KUN ? ? ? > KUN (SNIFF)

INTER-ESTING.
I'VE NEVER KILLED A LONG-EARS BEFORE.
I'LL DO IT.

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT NAME?

I REQUEST LENIENCE.
WE CAME HERE TO KEEP A PROMISE TO THE CHIEF.

WAIT.
AREN'T YOU CHIEF ZON'S YOUNGER SISTER?

KUN
KUN
KUN

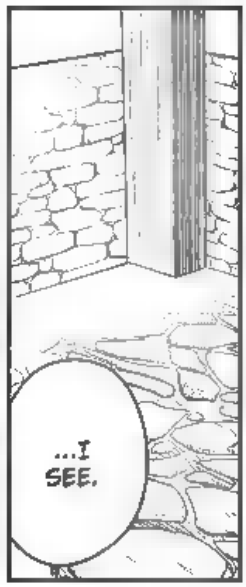
...HM!?

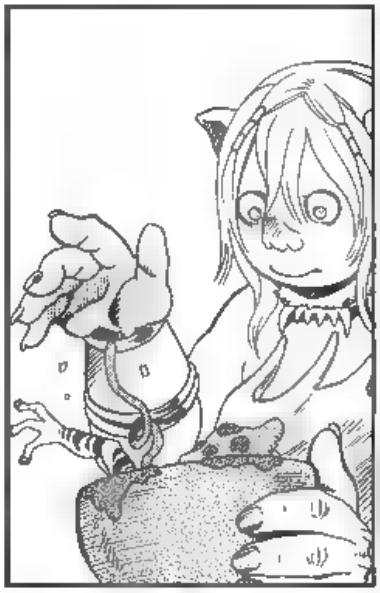
TO THINK YOU'D COME ALL THE WAY HERE...
WHAT DID YOU PROMISE THE CHIEF?

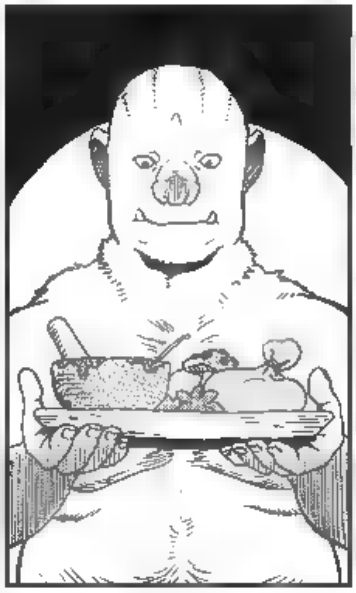
WA (CLAMOR)
ARE YOU THE VEGETA-BLE SELLER !?
WE DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU. YOU SMELL DIFFERENT.
THE BATH ...!!

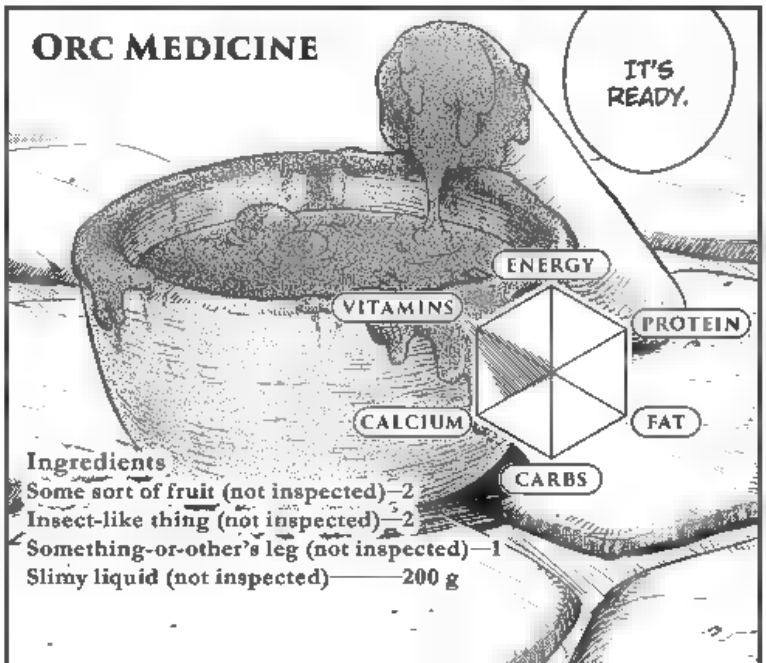
I THANK YOU IN THE CHIEF'S PLACE.
ONE OF YOU, PREPARE FOR COMPOUNDING.

SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED.
I THOUGHT IT WAS ODD THAT THE DRAGON WAS SUDDENLY GONE.


...I SEE.





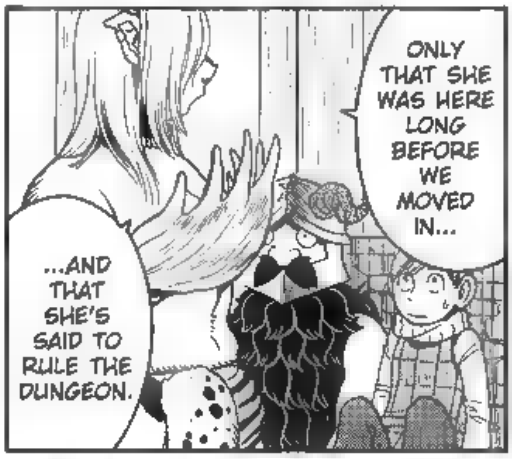

ORC MEDICINE
IT'S READY.
ENERGY
VITAMINS
PROTEIN
CALCIUM
FAT
CARBS
Ingredients
Some sort of fruit (not inspected)—2
Insect-like thing (not inspected)—2
Something-or-other's leg (not inspected)—1
Slimy liquid (not inspected)———200 g

GORI (GRIND)
GORI

GOBU (SPLURT)
GUI (SHLURP)
KON (TAP)
BLEH...
KON
BIKU
BIKUN (THRASH)
NH!!!!
...NA...
HNFFF!
HNFFF!
I...
I...I'M JUSH...
...OUD OF MA...

DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HER?
S-SAY...
WE WERE ATTACKED BY AN ELF MAGICIAN.

ZUI (LOOM)
YOU MET HER!?
AGH!?

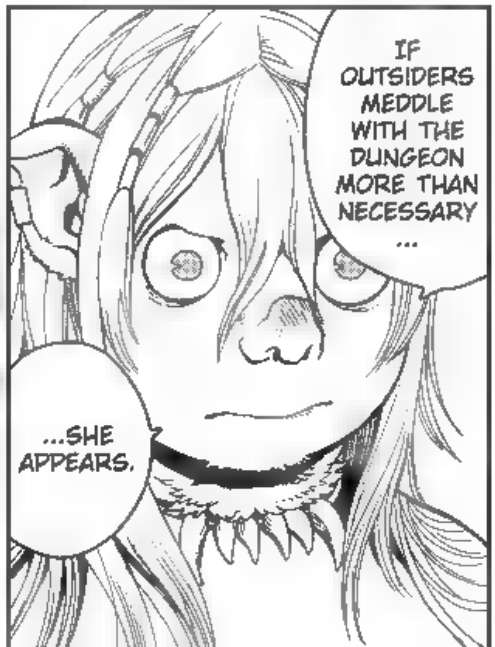

ONLY THAT SHE WAS HERE LONG BEFORE WE MOVED IN...
...AND THAT SHE'S SAID TO RULE THE DUNGEON.

.....
I DON'T KNOW ANY PARTIC-ULARS.

UM.
BROWN SKIN, SILVER HAIR...?
THAT'S THE ONE.

SHE CAN KILL ANYTHING, JUST BY PAGING THROUGH A BOOK.

SHE CREATES MON-STERS, CON-TROLS THEM...
...CHANGES THE LAY OF THE LAND...


IF OUTSIDERS MEDDLE WITH THE DUNGEON MORE THAN NECESSARY ...
...SHE APPEARS.

...WE CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN?
DON'T EVEN JOKE ABOUT THAT!

RULES THE DUNGEON?
YOU MEAN...

SHE HAS SEVERAL MONSTERS WORKING FOR HER.
IF YOU KILL THEM, YOU DRAW HER ANGER.

WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE NOW!
SOWA (PANIC)
SOWA
DID KILLING THE RED DRAGON DO IT?
DID MARCILLE'S MAGIC ATTRACT HER?
DAMMIT!

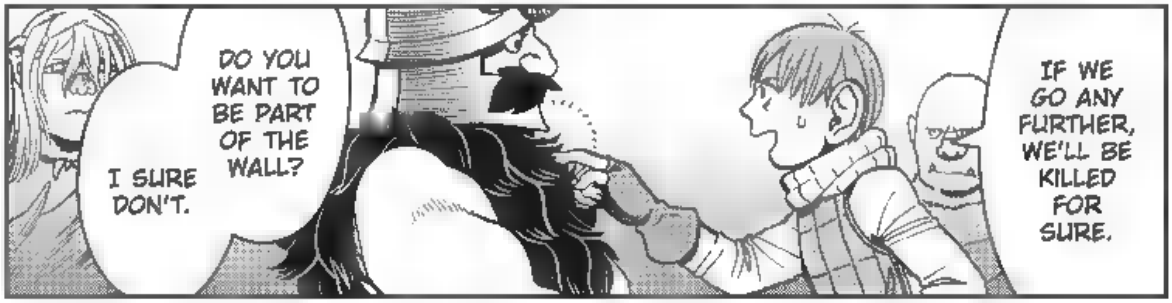
WHEN THOSE TWO WAKE UP, THEY'LL WANT TO GO LOOK FOR FALIN.

MEAN-ING...?
WE'VE GOT TO MAKE THEM GIVE UP.

TO GUARD AGAINST THAT, MY BIG BROTHER TOLD US NOT TO TOUCH THE RED DRAGON.
MY BROTHER IS ALWAYS RIGHT.
THAT JERK.

IF WE DON'T, THOSE IDIOTS WILL NEVER GIVE UP.
YEAH, I DO!

OR SAY THAT WE'RE SATISFIED NOW WE'VE EATEN DRAGON MEAT.
OR THAT WE SAW FALIN SET OFF FOR THE SURFACE.
YOU MEAN TRICK THEM?
ANY-THING'S FINE.
WE COULD BURN HER STAFF.


DO YOU WANT TO BE PART OF THE WALL?
I SURE DON'T.
IF WE GO ANY FURTHER, WE'LL BE KILLED FOR SURE.

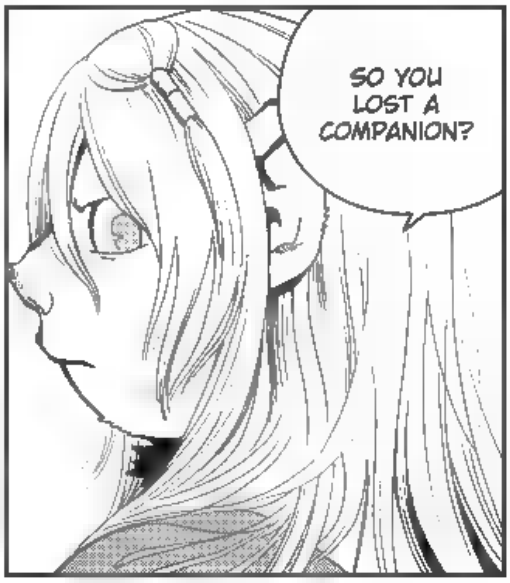
.....

THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NO WAY I'M DYING WITH THOSE TWO.

NO.
THE STINK OF YOUR ROTTEN NATURE MIGHT RUB OFF ON ME.
HMM...
SAY...
I'D LIKE TO GO PICK UP THE THINGS WE LEFT.
COULD YOU SHOW US THE WAY?
HE'S A COWARD, BUT HE ISN'T A BAD PERSON.
PLEASE, I'M ASKING YOU AS WELL.
WHA...!?
TAKE HIM THERE.
...IF YOU'RE ASKING, THEN I CAN'T ARGUE.
I DON'T LIKE IT, BUT I'LL GUIDE HIM.
TH—
SOMEBODY NEEDS TO STAY WITH THOSE TWO.
SENSHI! YOU'RE NOT COMING!?

DAMMIT.
THEY'RE ALL IDIOTS, EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM. IDIOTS!

...YEAH.
THE LAST TIME WE SAW HER, SHE WAS ON THE GROUND AT THE FEET OF THAT MAGICIAN.
IT'S PRETTY HARD TO BE OPTIMISTIC.


SO YOU LOST A COMPANION?

UH, NO.
JIRO (GLARE)
IT'S NOTHING.

MAYBE. THAT'S NO EXCUSE FOR TRICKING YOUR COMPANIONS.
TCH!!
PRETTY EASY TO TALK WHEN IT'S NOT YOUR PROBLEM.

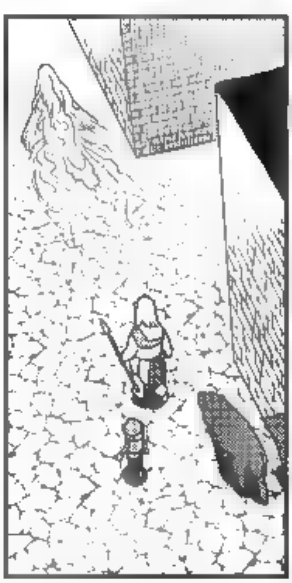
SUU (SWISH)
.....

WH—
BOFU (BAFF)
AGH!

HUH?
BEHIND YOU.

THE GHOSTS AROUND HERE ARE STILL SANE.
THEY ONLY APPEAR WHEN THEY WANT TO BE SEEN.

DON'T MAKE A FUSS.
SHE'S A RESIDENT OF THIS CITY.
HINYARI (CHILL)



FOR REAL...?

THE PATHS THEY TRAVEL ARE SAFE.
LET'S FOLLOW HER.

I COULD'VE SWORN WE FELL FROM THERE, BUT...
THAT'S WHERE WE WERE.
THE RED DRAGON'S GONE.
OH...!
OVER THERE.
THE DOGS DON'T SEEM WARY.
I'D SAY THE MAGICIAN EITHER ERASED IT OR TOOK IT AWAY.
BIKURI (FLINCH)
NO. DON'T TELL ME...
DID IT... COME BACK TO LIFE!?
ONE OF OUR PARTY CAST A DEFENSIVE SPELL...
AND YOU WERE ALL RIGHT!?
WE USED FIRE NEAR THE DRAGON'S FUEL SAC, AND IT CAUGHT.
...I SEE TRACES OF AN EXPLO-SION...

THAT'S NOT THE POINT.
EVEN SHE DIDN'T KNOW SHE COULD USE THAT SPELL.

YOU'VE GOT SOME GOOD COMPAN-IONS.

...IT PROTECTED US, SO WE WERE FINE.

THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE LIKE.
...IF IT HADN'T, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A DUMB MOVE!

OUR HEALER CHARGED IN, AND WE WERE ALMOST BLOWN AWAY.
SURE, IT WORKED IN THE END, BUT...

THEN WHEN THERE WAS AN OPENING, LAIOS GRABBED HIS CHANCE, AND—
OH, HE'S THE TALL-MAN. ANYWAY, HE...
SENSHI AND I ACTED AS BAIT.

HOW DID YOU SLAY THE RED DRAGON ON YOUR OWN ANYWAY?

THAT'S SPLENDID.
THOSE WHO FIGHT MUST BE COURAGEOUS.

...JUMPED RIGHT IN CLOSE AND NAILED THE DRAGON IN A VITAL SPOT.
OH-HO.

IT STUCK BACK ON!
FRANKLY, IT GAVE ME CHILLS.
WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO A GUY WHO MAKES DECISIONS LIKE THAT?

...THAT WASN'T COURAGE.
IT WAS A FOOL'S GAMBLE. WE WERE LUCKY IT WORKED.

AND THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN WORTH LOSING A COM-PANION?

I SHOULD HAVE LEFT THEN TOO, INSTEAD OF BEING STUBBORN.

WE HAD COMPANIONS WHO LEFT THE PARTY.
THEY MAY HAVE BEEN THE SMART ONES.

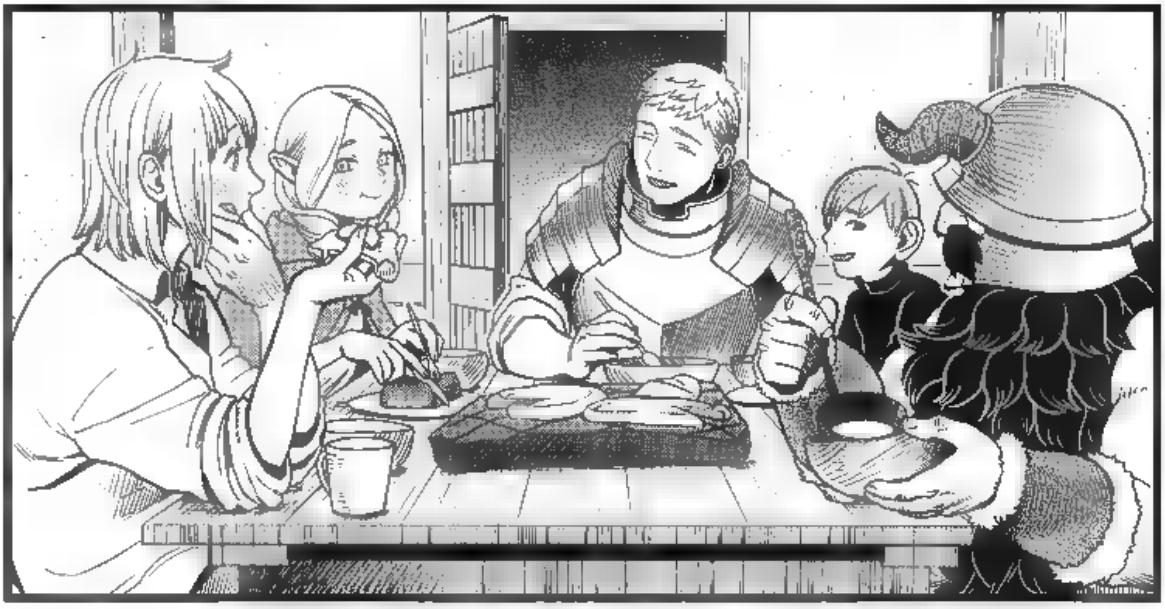
MAYBE HE COULDN'T TURN BACK BECAUSE I SAID I'D GO ALONG.

YOU NEVER KNOW...

AND IN THIS ROOM, WE...
GII (CREAK)

WE HEALED OUR WOUNDS ...
...AND EVERY-THING ELSE...

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT?

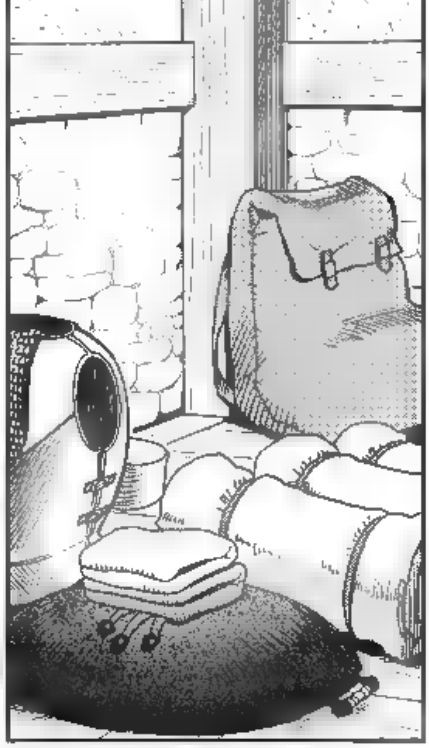


THAT'S GOOD.
IT'S THE VICTORS' PRIVILEGE.
YEAH, WELL.

...COOKED UP THE DRAGON MEAT AND ATE IT.

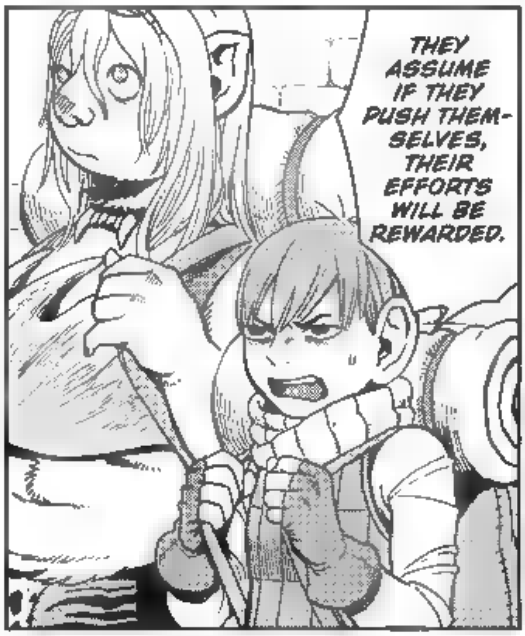
OUR MAGICIAN HELD UP UNDER THE ATTACKS.

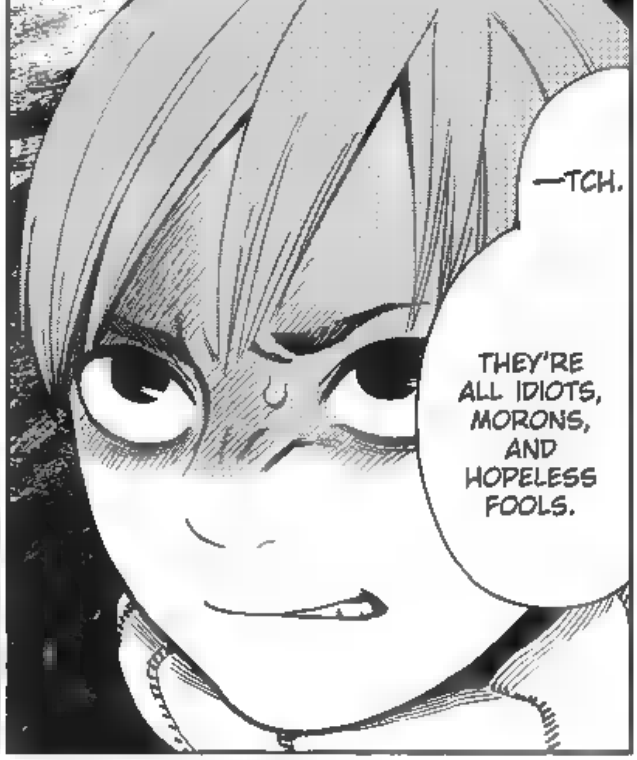
AND AFTER THAT, THE MAGICIAN APPEARED?
HOW DID YOU SURVIVE?



SHE USES SKETCHY MAGIC TOO.
SHE ACTUALLY IS SILLY.
EVEN IF WE GET OUT OF THE DUNGEON, I DOUBT SHE'LL MANAGE TO LIVE A DECENT LIFE.

HUH!
THE LONG-EARS WHO WAS ON THE FLOOR!?
AND SHE HAD SUCH A SILLY-LOOKING FACE...

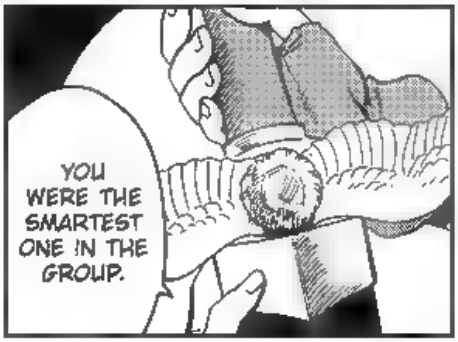

THEY ASSUME IF THEY PUSH THEMSELVES, THEIR EFFORTS WILL BE REWARDED.

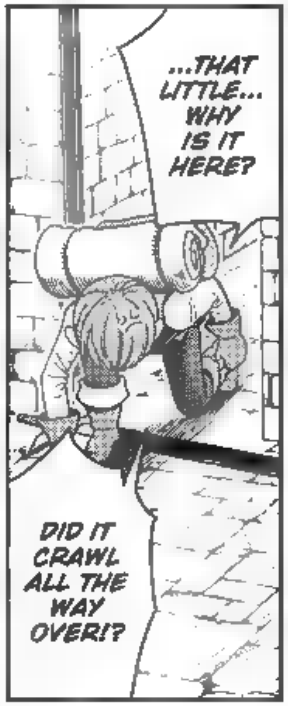

—TCH.
THEY'RE ALL IDIOTS, MORONS, AND HOPELESS FOOLS.

AFTER ALL, I'M A COWARD, AND MY LIFE IS WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT TO ME!
IF LYING WILL GET US BACK TO THE SURFACE, SO BE IT!
NOT WHAT I MEANT.

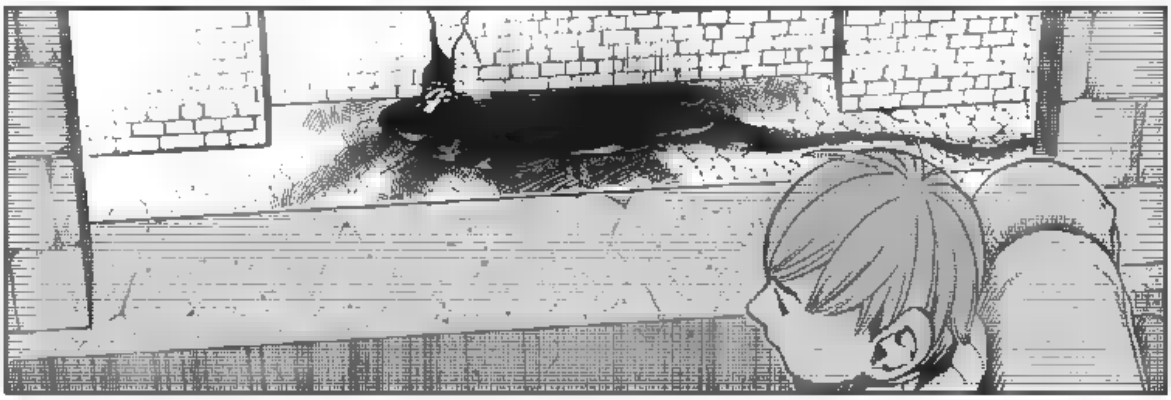
SO YOU'RE TRICKING THEM!?
YOU THINK IT'S POSSIBLE TO PERSUADE PEOPLE LIKE THAT!?
THERE'S A BETTER WAY TO DO IT.

JUST BE HONEST AND TELL THEM YOU DON'T WANT THEM TO DIE.


YOU WERE THE SMARTEST ONE IN THE GROUP.


...THAT LITTLE... WHY IS IT HERE?
DID IT CRAWL ALL THE WAY OVER!?

GA (TRIP)



I'LL LEAVE WITHOUT YOU.
R-RIGHT.

A BLOOD TRACK...
AS IF SOMEONE DRAGGED A CORPSE...

I GOT OUR STUFF.
ガチャ
GACHA (CHAJO)

WOW.
ZU
ZU
ZU (PRESS)
NOTHING HURTS.
ONLY BECAUSE YOUR NERVES ARE SCREWY FROM THE MEDICINE.
FALIN IS STILL NEARBY. SHE HAS TO BE.

WHOA!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?
SERI-OUSLY, REST!

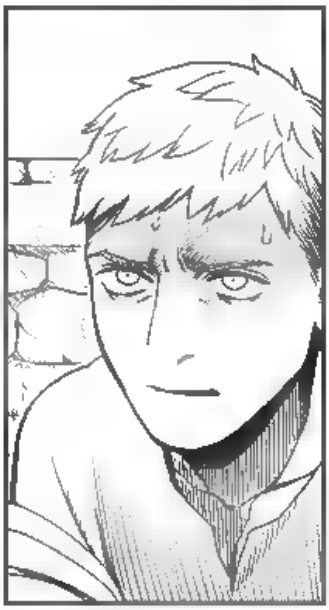
...I NEED TO TALK TO YOU TWO.

HAAAH...

DO (WHUD)
CALM DOWN!

LET ME TALK FIRST.

SU (SHUF)
CHILCHUCK, I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, AND I...



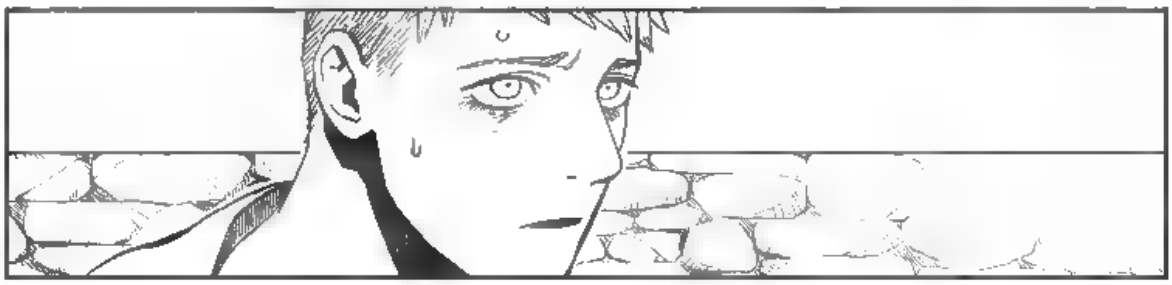
LAIOS.
I CAN'T BEGIN TO KNOW WHAT YOU'RE FEELING RIGHT NOW.

GU (CLENCH)

SOMEBODY WILL DIE FOR SURE.

EVEN SO, AS THINGS STAND...
...WE CAN'T CONTINUE THIS EXPEDI-TION.

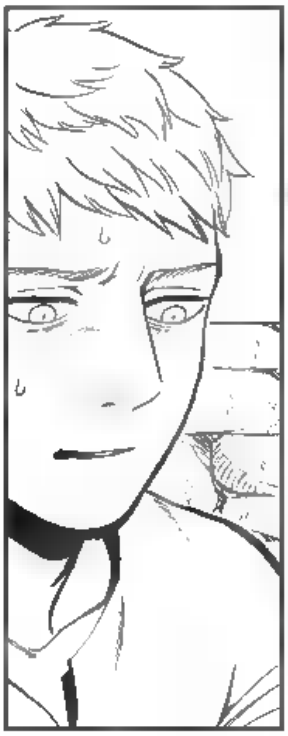
FOR NOW, GRIT YOUR TEETH AND GO BACK TO THE SURFACE.
I'M BEGGING YOU, LAIOS!



IF WE'RE BETTER PREPARED, WE CAN GET TO THIS LEVEL FASTER.

IF WE SAY [redacted] SAW THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN, THE LORD OF THE ISLAND MIGHT ACT!
OR WE COULD COLLECT MONEY AND HIRE SOME-BODY!

I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU GUYS!
MAYBE THEY'RE NOT AS INTENSE AS YOUR FEELINGS FOR YOUR SISTER, BUT I'VE GOT THREE PEOPLE TO THINK OF HERE.

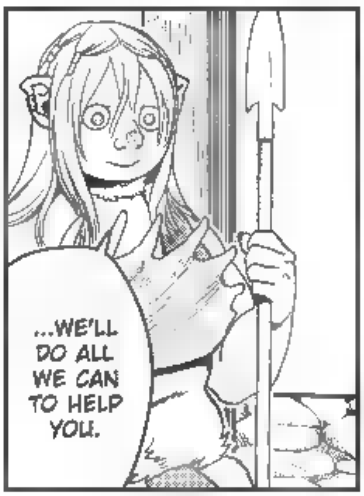


...LET'S TURN BACK, LAIOS...
SO...
...
PLEASE...

WE SHOULD GO BACK TO TOWN FOR SUPPLIES.

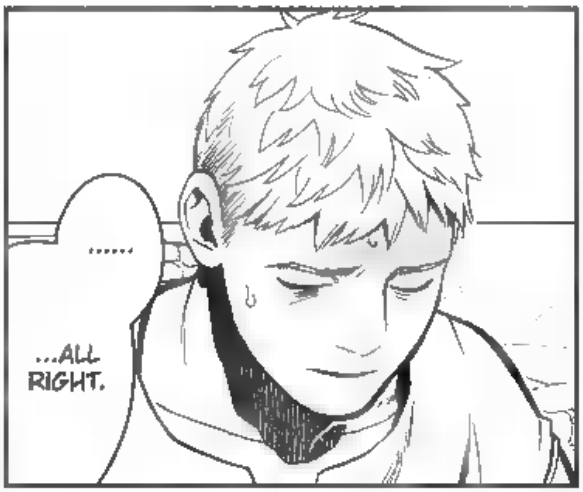
I'D LIKE TO GIVE FALIN A PROPER MEAL.
...WE'RE NEARLY OUT OF SOME FOODSTUFFS, SEASONINGS AND SUCH.

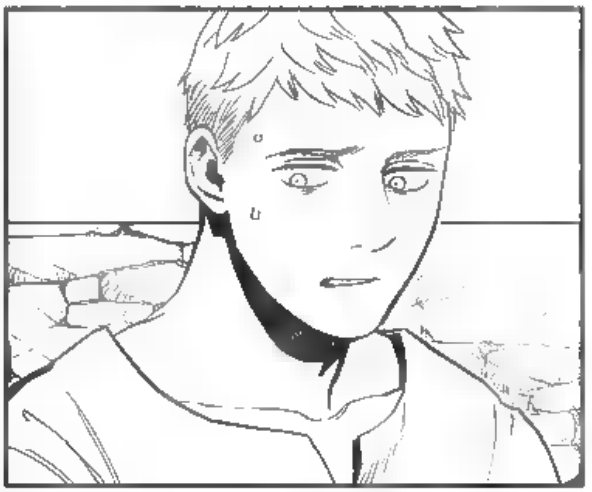
AS A MATTER OF FACT...

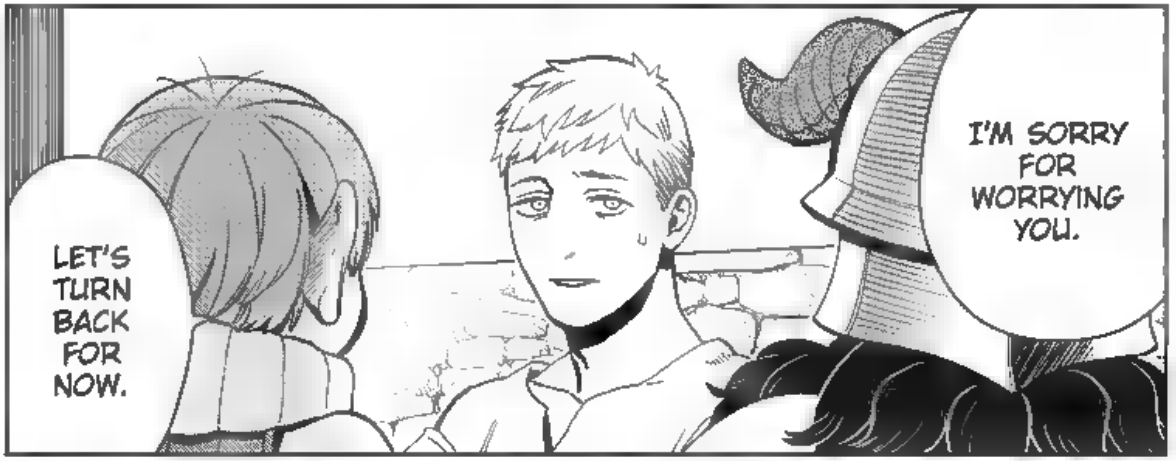

...WE'LL DO ALL WE CAN TO HELP YOU.

IF YOU PREPARE AND THEN COME BACK...
MY BROTHER AND THE REST WILL RETURN SOON.

I SENT A MESSENGER TO REPORT THE RED DRAGON'S DEATH.


.....
...ALL RIGHT.




LET'S TURN BACK FOR NOW.
I'M SORRY FOR WORRYING YOU.

OKAY...

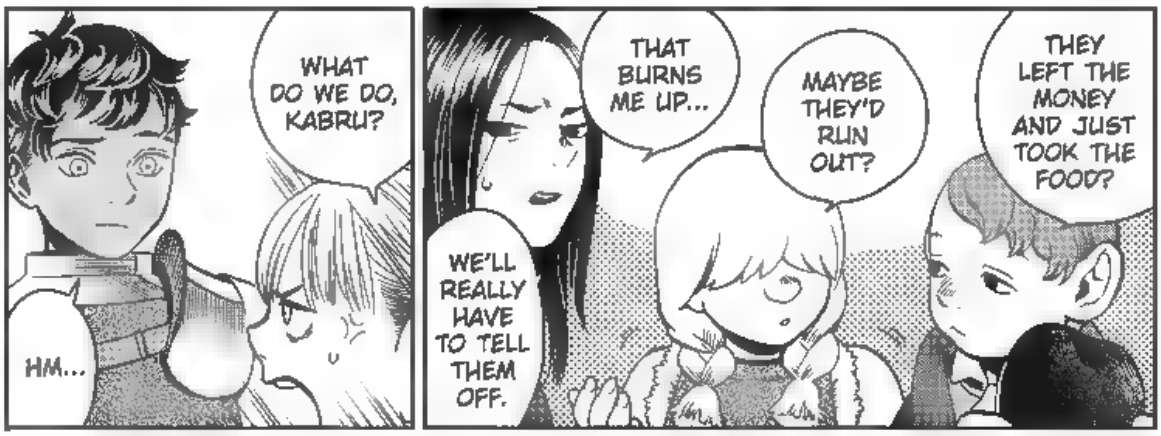
PON PAT

31. Sea Serpent, Part 1

A LITTLE EARLIER...
UP WE GET.
IF YOU'D STAYED DEAD IN THE WATER, YOU'D BE FISH FOOD NOW.
BE GRATEFUL TO WHOEVER HAULED YOU OUT.
...IT'S NOT A PERFECT FIX.
YOU DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH BLOOD, SO I USED GOAT BLOOD, BUT...
I'D MAKE A TRIP BACK TO TOWN.
IS YOUR MIND CLEAR?
NOTHING PHYSICALLY SEEMS OFF?
I'M NOT SEEING ANY PROBLEMS...
I'LL LET YOU OFF FOR THE PRICE OF THE GOAT.
REVIVAL FEE.
SUN
SUN (SNIFF) SUN
I KNOW THIS SMELL!
IT'S THE TREASURE TAKERS!
I KNEW IT! IT'S THOSE GUYS!
HAULED US OUT? YOU DON'T MEAN...
KURO!

YES, THAT'S ALL OF IT.
AN ADVEN-TURER ...?
I THINK... WE WERE ATTACKED BY FISH-MEN...
GYU (SQUEEZE)
APPARENTLY, WE DIED AGAIN.
WHAT?
... NOTHING.
YOU'RE ...
IS THAT RIGHT.
I'VE NEVER CHOSEN MY FRIENDS BASED ON HEIGHT.
YOU HAVE NO PRINCI-PLES.
SO YOU GO FOR DWARFS TOO?
.....
OH. YEAH.
LET'S GO, NAMARI.

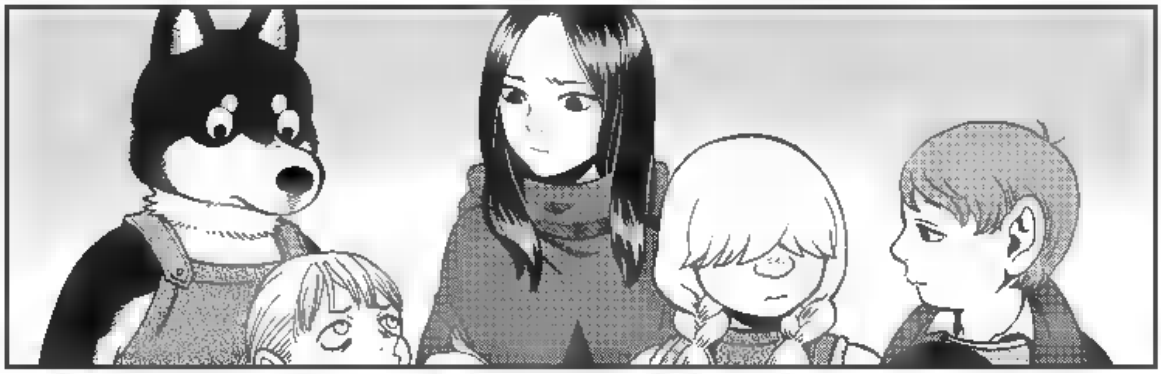
AGAIN ...?
DON'T SCREW WITH ME, PEOPLE!
PYON
PYON (BOING)
EE YAA!
THEY TOOK THEM! AGAIN!
OUR PROVI-SIONS ARE GONE!
FOOD...


WHAT DO WE DO, KABRU?
HM...
THAT BURNS ME UP...
MAYBE THEY'D RUN OUT?
THEY LEFT THE MONEY AND JUST TOOK THE FOOD?
WE'LL REALLY HAVE TO TELL THEM OFF.

WITH THE CULPRITS STILL ON THE LOOSE?
WHA —!?
ARE YOU SERI-OUS!?
WE'RE OUT OF FOOD. WE CAN'T JUST KEEP GOING.

THERE'S NO HELP FOR IT.
LET'S HEAD BACK TO TOWN.

IT'S LIKE THOSE PEOPLE SAID.
WE SHOULD JUST BE GRATEFUL WE'RE ALIVE.
WE HAVE TO ADMIT WE WEREN'T STRONG ENOUGH.



KURO WILL FOLLOW MIKBELL.
.....

...THEN I'M OKAY WITH IT.
IF YOU PROMISE WE WON'T GIVE UP ON FINDING THE CULPRITS...
I PROMISE, RIN.

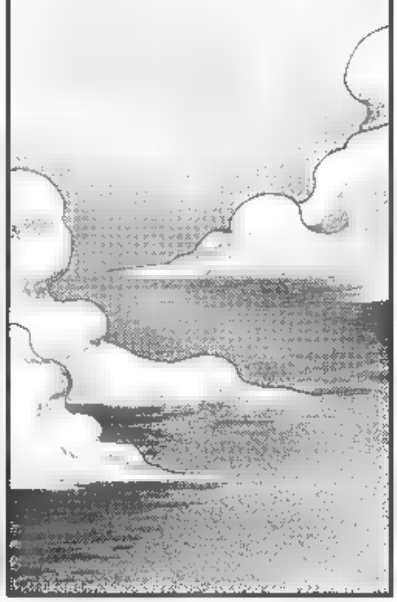
ME TOO.
IF THAT'S YOUR DECISION, KABRU, I'LL OBEY.
THANK YOU, HOLM.
DAYA.

THIS EXPEDITION REALLY LEFT US IN THE RED.
SOME OF THEM DO THAT.

HAAAAH...

IT'S GOTTEN MISTY.
EVERY-BODY BE CAREF...

HM?



!

HFFFH...
HFFFH...

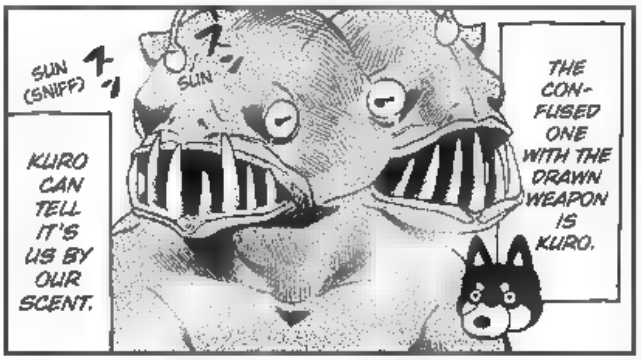
IS IT THE WORK OF A MONSTER?
THIS ISN'T A NATURAL MIST!!

FISH-MEN!?
HFFH!
HFF!
THERE ARE SO MANY! WHEN DID THEY...!?
HFF!
HFF!
DAMN. I'LL HAVE TO FIGHT...

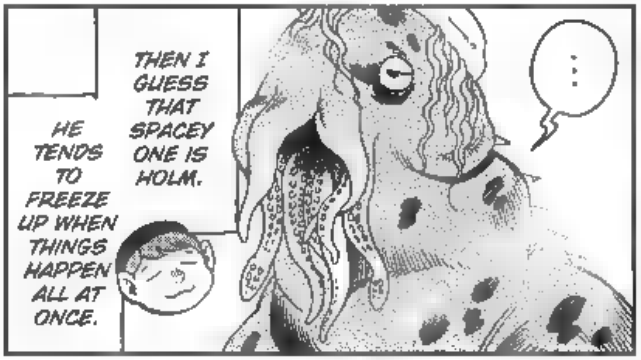
HERE IT COMES!!
EEP!
GRAAA
GIIIN (CLANG)

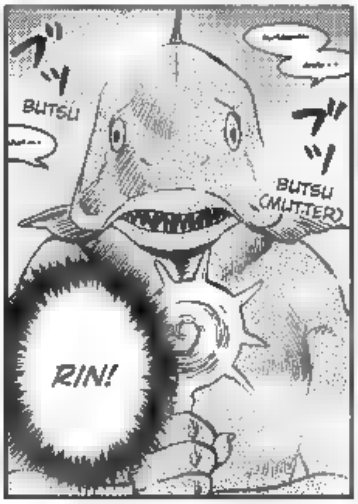
GHK...!?
PYON (BOING)
PYON
BIRI (STRAIN)
BIRI
THAT SLASHING, SWEEPING AX...!
HRRAAA
RIGHT.
THIS IS...
I KNOW THAT STYLE.

GA (WHUD)
DOBOO (BLOOSH)
???
GRR...
CALM DOWN.
DAYA. IT'S ME.
SHH!
GRRR!
IT'S OKAY.


SUN (SNIFF)
SUN
KURO CAN TELL IT'S US BY OUR SCENT.
THE CON-FUSED ONE WITH THE DRAWN WEAPON IS KURO.

THIS MIST IS ILLUSION MAGIC.


...
THEN I GUESS THAT SPACEY ONE IS HOLM.
HE TENDS TO FREEZE UP WHEN THINGS HAPPEN ALL AT ONCE.


BUTSU
BUTSU (MUTTER)
RIN!

SA (SWISH)
THE ONE WHO RAN OFF MUST BE MIK.
THEN THE MOST DANGER-OUS ONE NOW IS...

IF YOU WANT TO STOP A MAGICIAN'S CHANT PEACEFULLY...

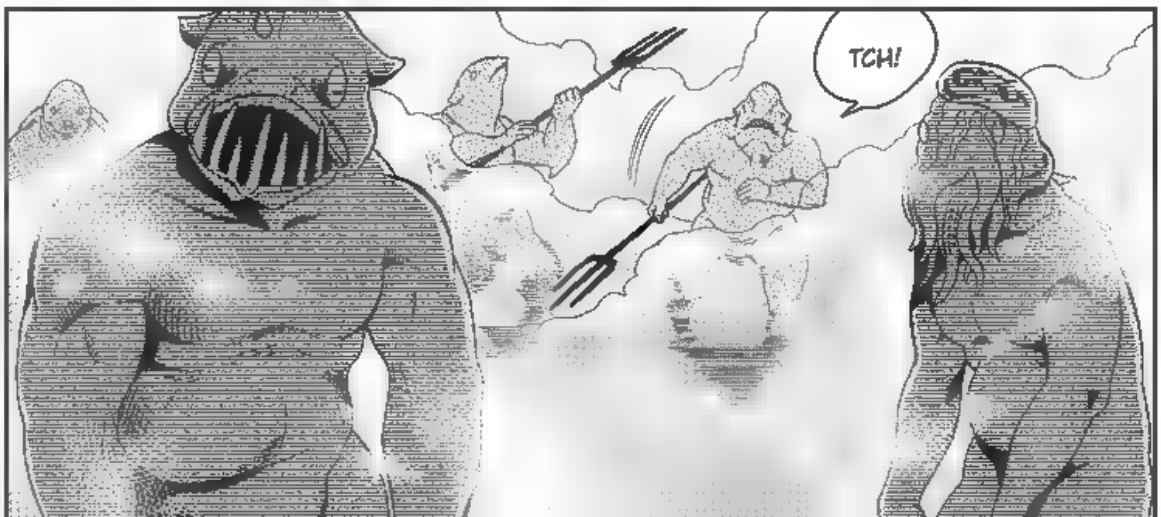
THERE, YOU SEE!? SHE'S CHANT-ING!
SHE COULD TURN US ALL TO CINDERS.

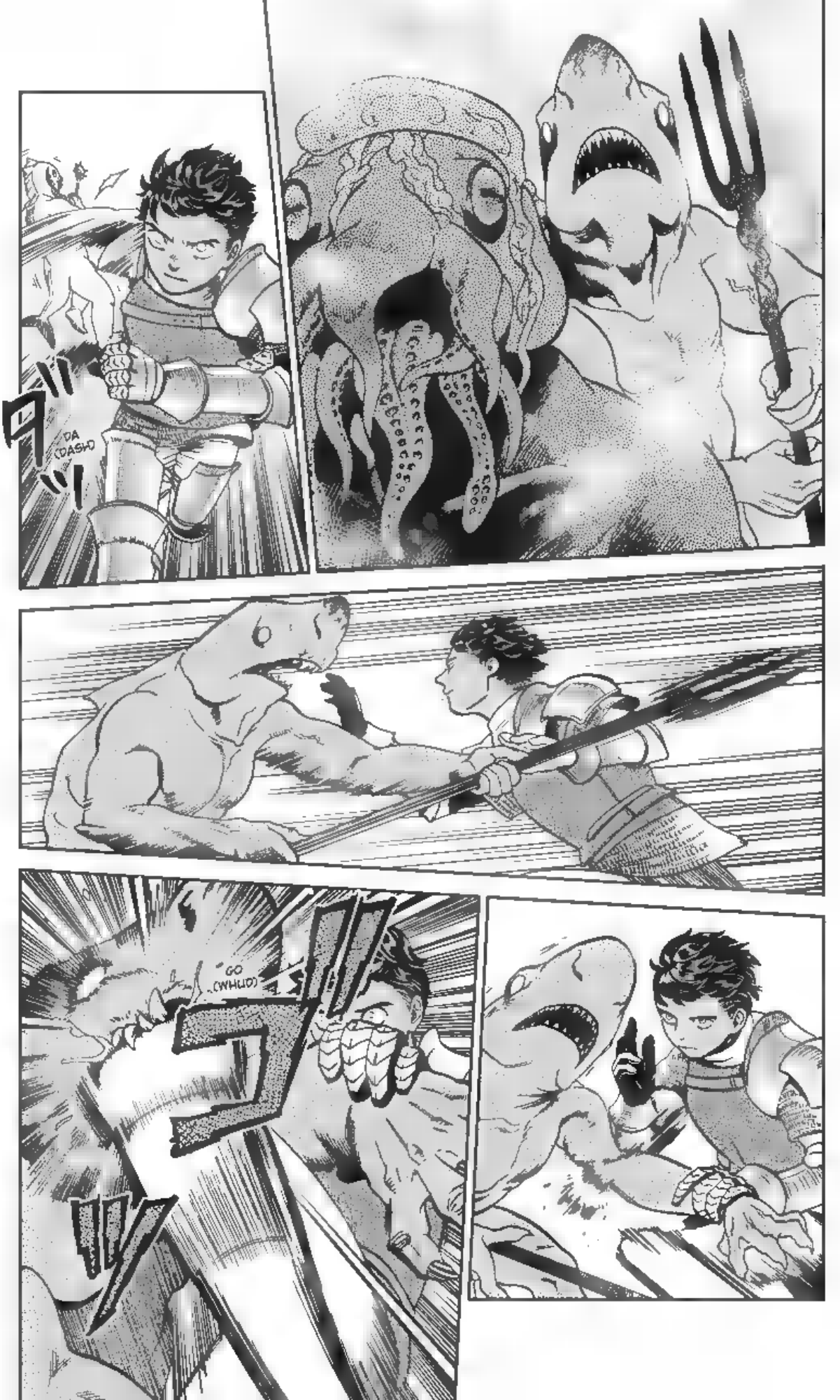
RINSHA.
YOU CAN TELL, CAN'T YOU?

OKAY.
IN ORDER TO STOP THIS MIST ILLUSION ...

IT'S TOO BAD SHE LOOKS LIKE A MONSTER.
...

THIS IS AN ILLUSION.


TCH!


DA (DASH)
GO (WHUD)

WH-WHY, YOU—!

DO (THWOK)

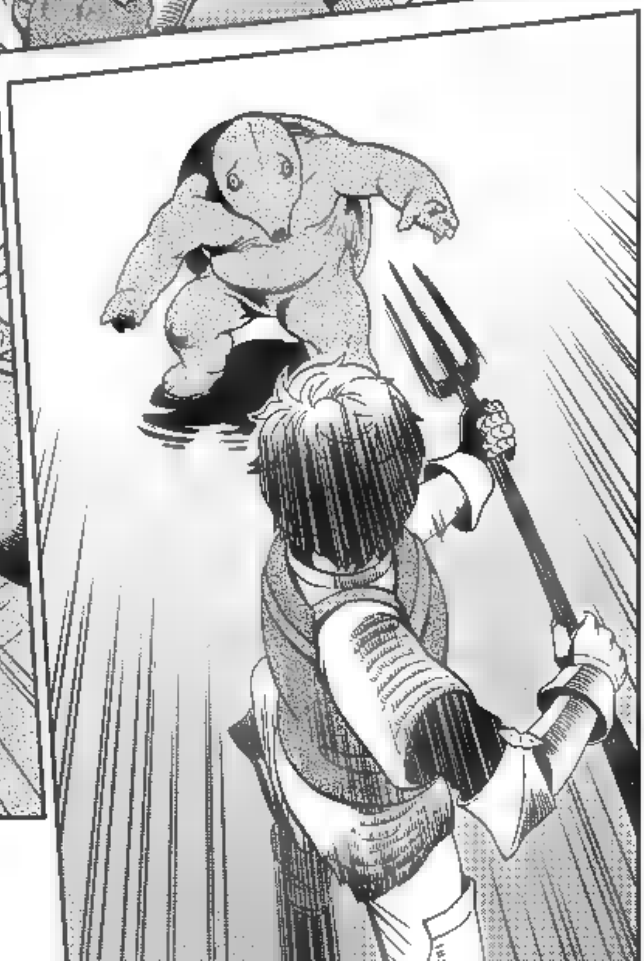
HE'LL BE WATCHING US FROM THE FRINGE.

CASTERS DON'T COME AT YOU WITH WEAPONS.
HE'S NOT THE ONE.

THAT ONE!

WHAT...?
WHA...

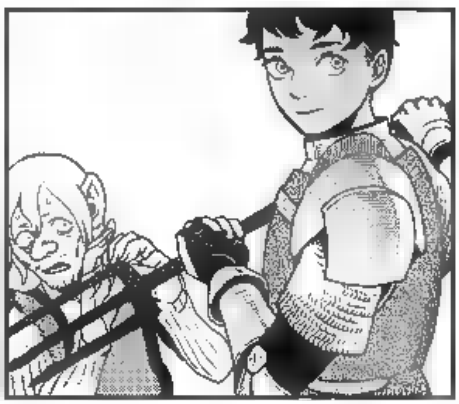
BLIWA (FWOOSH)
AH...
AAAAGH!



OKAY, YOU GOT US.
WE GIVE!
FU (FFT)

LET HIM GO, WOULDJA?
GYO (JOLT)

THEY'RE THE CORPSE RETRIEVERS FROM UPSTAIRS!
THESE GUYS...!



CORPSES RETRIEVED ON LOWER LEVELS ARE WORTH MORE.
IN SUBSIDIES FROM THE ISLAND.
PON (PAT)
WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I DOUBT THIS WAS A CHANCE REUNION.
I BET THEY FOLLOWED US.
THE NERVE!
AHA...
THEY KNEW IF THEY FOLLOWED US FROM A DISTANCE...
VOILÀ— MORE VALUABLE CORPSES.
PUKAA (BLOOD?)
WE GOT ALL FIRED UP TO RETAKE OUR STOLEN BOUNTY...
...AND WENT TO A LEVEL WE COULDN'T HANDLE.
YOU PANICKED AND TOOK DRASTIC STEPS.
USING AN ILLUSION TO MAKE US KILL OURSELVES.
YOU WERE A LITTLE LATE, THOUGH.
BY THE TIME YOU FOUND US, WE'D BEEN REVIVED...
...AND WERE HEADING BACK TO THE SURFACE.

WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT YOU'D GET WIPED OUT BY MONSTERS SO SOON?
HEH HEH.
TOO BAD.

IDEALLY, YOU WOULD HAVE CAUGHT UP TO THOSE THIEVES AND KILLED EACH OTHER.
CLOSE, BUT NOT QUITE.

SIGH...

WE'RE REPORTING THIS TO THE LORD OF THE ISLAND.
THEFT AND COMBAT AMONG ADVENTURERS ARE GRAVE CRIMES.

YOU LITTLE ...!

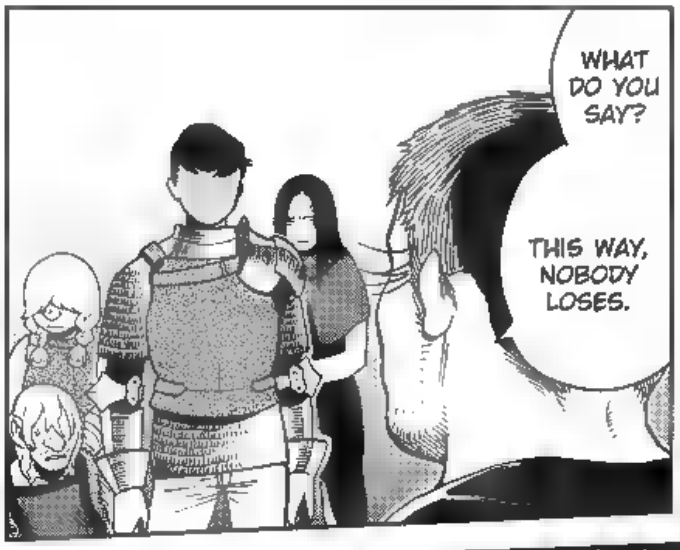
TAKE THEM TO THE RESURRECTION OFFICE. THEY SHOULD PAY YOU A FAIR SUM.
AS IT HAPPENS, TWO OF OUR COMPANIONS ARE OUT COLD.

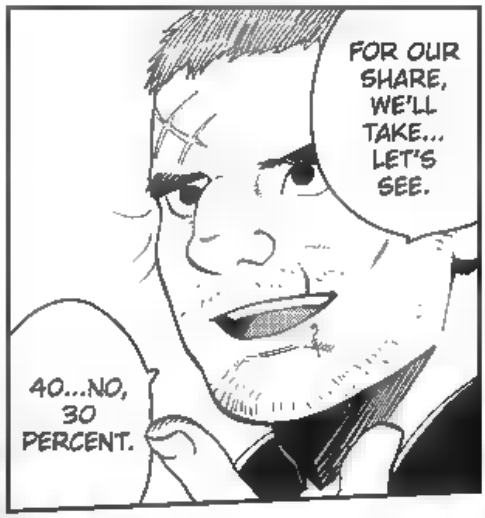
IF YOU GO BACK NOW, YOU'LL LOSE OUT TOO.
WANT TO MAKE A DEAL?

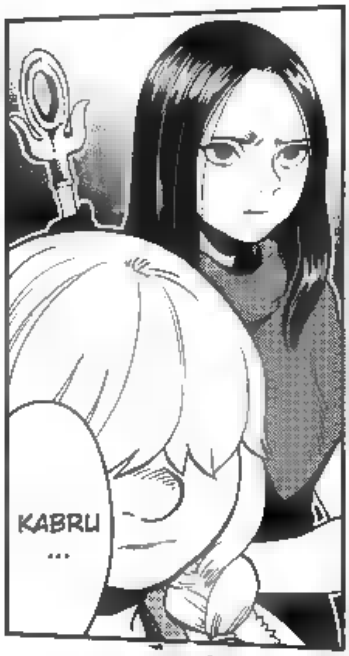
PON (TAP)
WE'LL TESTIFY THAT THEY WERE ATTACKED BY FISHMEN.

KURU (TWIRL)

THEY'RE ONLY UNCONSCIOUS.


WHAT DO YOU SAY?
THIS WAY, NOBODY LOSES.

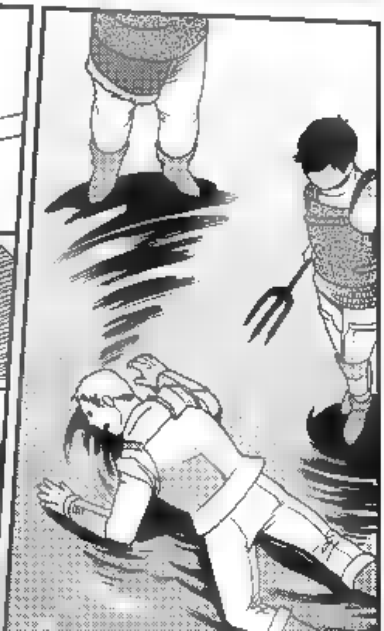

FOR OUR SHARE, WE'LL TAKE... LET'S SEE.
40...NO, 30 PERCENT.


KABRU ...

FINE.
IT'S A DEAL.

.....

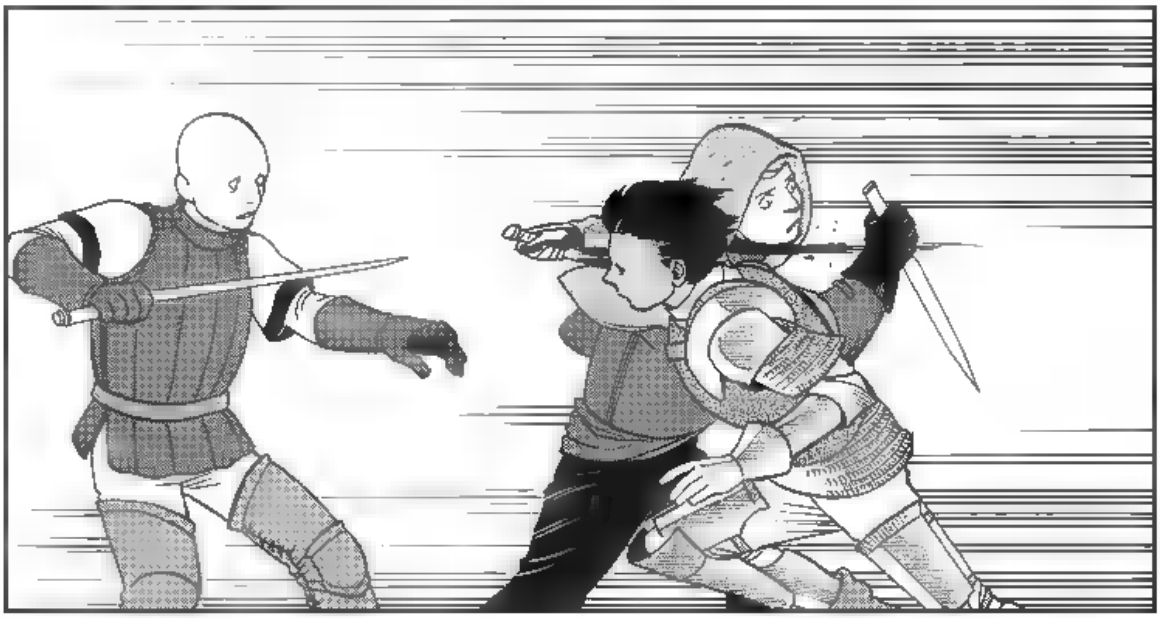
GU (LIFT)
GYUN (WHIRR)

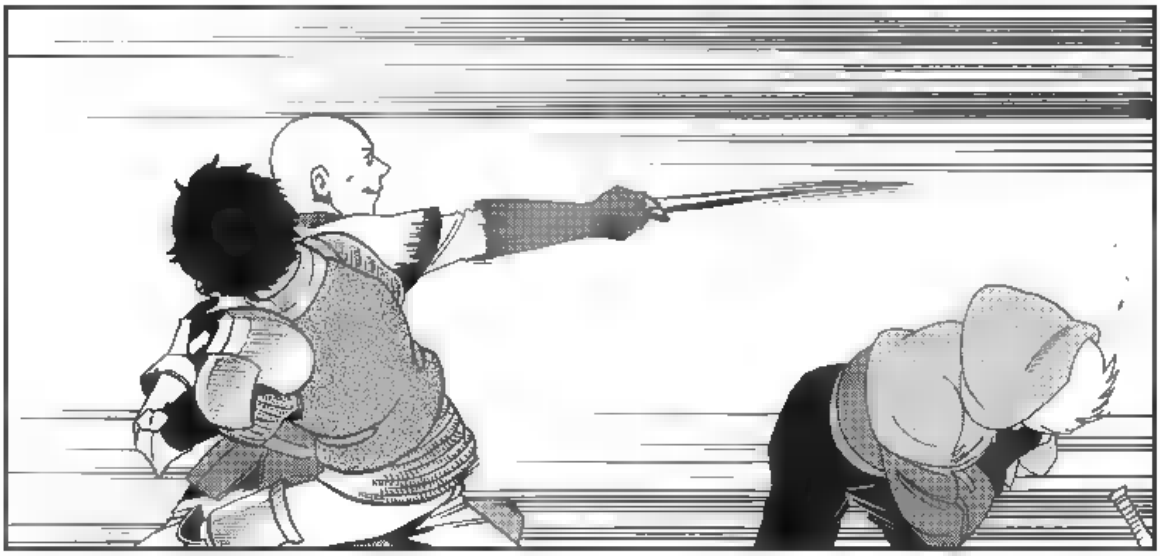


DO
(SHUNK)

WELL, OF COURSE.
THAT'S HOW IT SHOULD BE!

WHA ...!?
GOBO (SPLRT)
ゴリボ
YOU LITTLE ...





YEE...
YEEEEK!

ダボ
DABON
(SPLOOSH)
ドボ
DOBO
(SPLASH)

KURO, WOULD YOU GO FIND MIK?
SHE'LL BE HIDING OVER THERE.
WUFF.

TALL-MEN, DWARVES, AND GNOMES ...
THEY ALL HAVE THE SAME VITAL SPOTS.
AND THEY MOVE THE SAME WAY.
IT WOULD BE SIMPLER IF MONSTERS WERE LIKE THAT TOO.

WHEW.
PEOPLE ARE NICE AND EASY.

I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ANY OF THIS!
PL-PLEASE, LET ME GO!
WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH HIM?

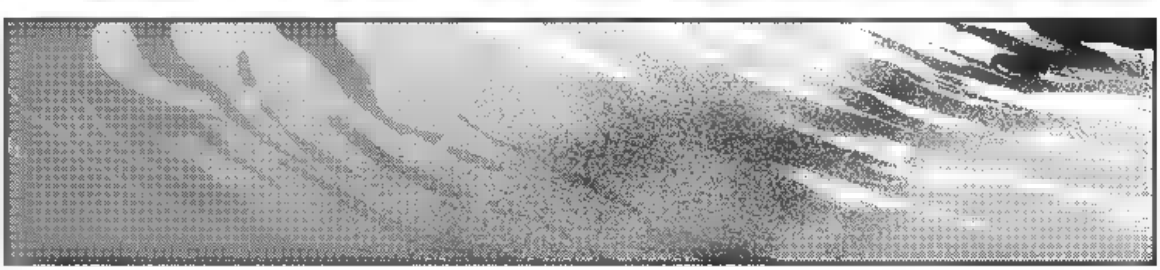
KABRU.

IF THIS GOES ON, EVERYONE DECENT WILL ABANDON THE ISLAND.

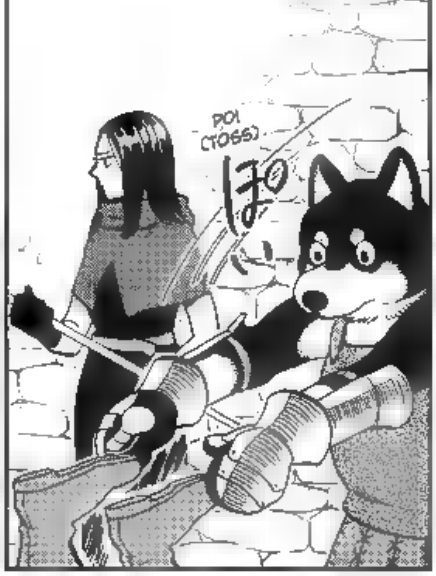
MORE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE MAKING THEIR LIVING STEALING FROM OTHERS.

YOU AREN'T TRYING TO BREAK THE DUN-GEON'S CURSE.
YOU DON'T WANT TO EXTERMI-NATE THE MON-STERS.

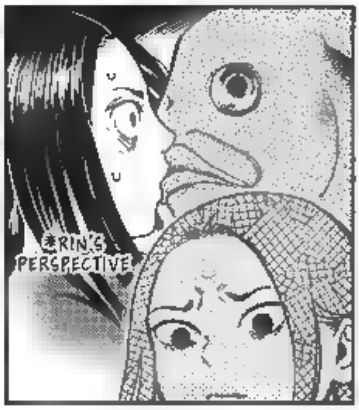
THAT'S WHY I CAN'T FORGIVE THE LIKES OF YOU.



KABRU.
DOBON (SPLOOSH)


POI (TOSS)

GESHI (KICK)
BOCHA (SPLASH)


*RIN'S PERSPECTIVE

THAT'S ALL I COULD MANAGE THAT QUICKLY.
OH. SORRY ABOUT EARLIER.

...HM?

I JUST KEEP FEELING IMPATIENT...
...AND I CAN'T SEEM TO MAKE ANY PROGRESS.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I DON'T KNOW. OR CARE.
OKAY, IF YOU'RE SURE.

THERE'S NO SENSE SUGAR-COATING IT.
THIS IS THE BEST WE CAN DO NOW.

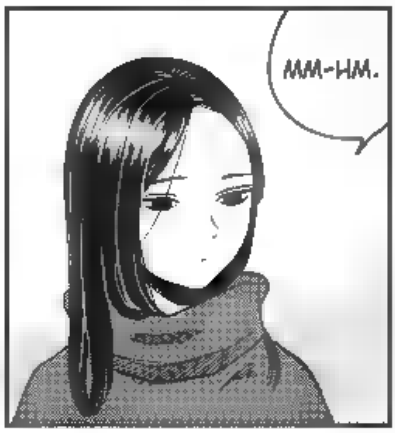
TRUE. THIS IS WHERE THAT IMPATIENCE LANDED US.
THE LOWEST. THE WORST.
WOULD IT KILL YOU TO BE ENCOURAG-ING?

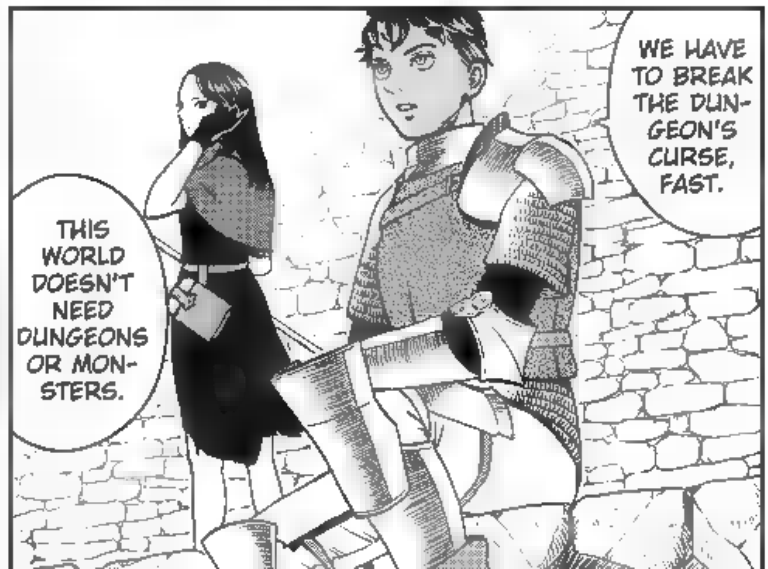
NO ONE GOES DOWN INTO FULLY EXPLORED DUNGEONS, THOUGH.
MAYBE BECAUSE THEY CAN'T DREAM OF STRIKING IT RICH.
MAYBE BECAUSE IT DOESN'T EXCITE THEIR SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE.

TO THE LORD OF THE ISLAND, THE DUNGEON IS JUST A PROFITABLE HOLE.
EVEN IF THE GOLD AND SILVER RUN OUT, HE THINKS HE CAN EKE OUT A LIVING ON MONSTER HIDES AND BONES.

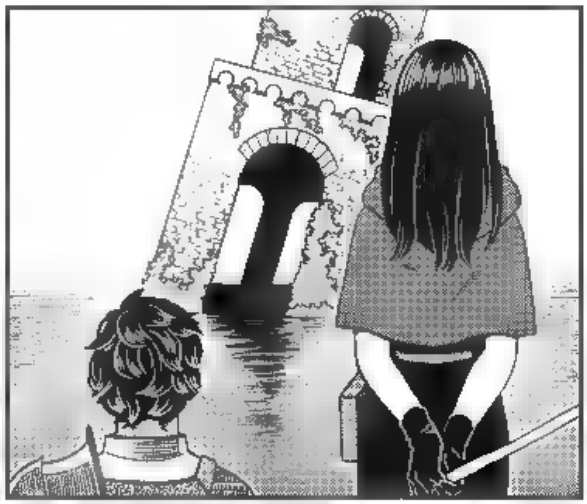
MANY VILLAGES FELL INTO RUIN THAT WAY.

THE POPULATION DROPS, THEN DROPS AGAIN.
MONSTERS FLOOD OUT OF THE DUNGEON AND TORMENT THE RESI-DENTS.


MM-HM.


WE HAVE TO BREAK THE DUN-GEON'S CURSE, FAST.
THIS WORLD DOESN'T NEED DUNGEONS OR MON-STERS.

...BEING REVIVED DOES MAKE YOU HUNGRY, DOESN'T IT?
I'M HUNGRY.

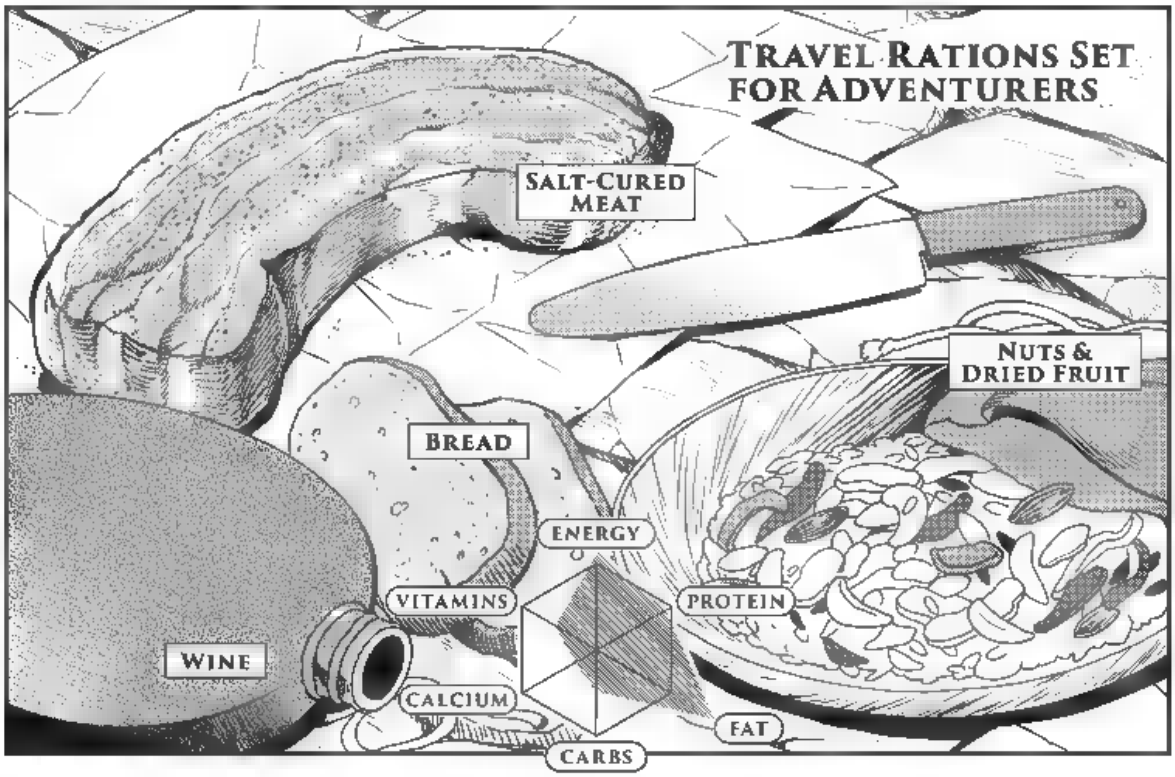


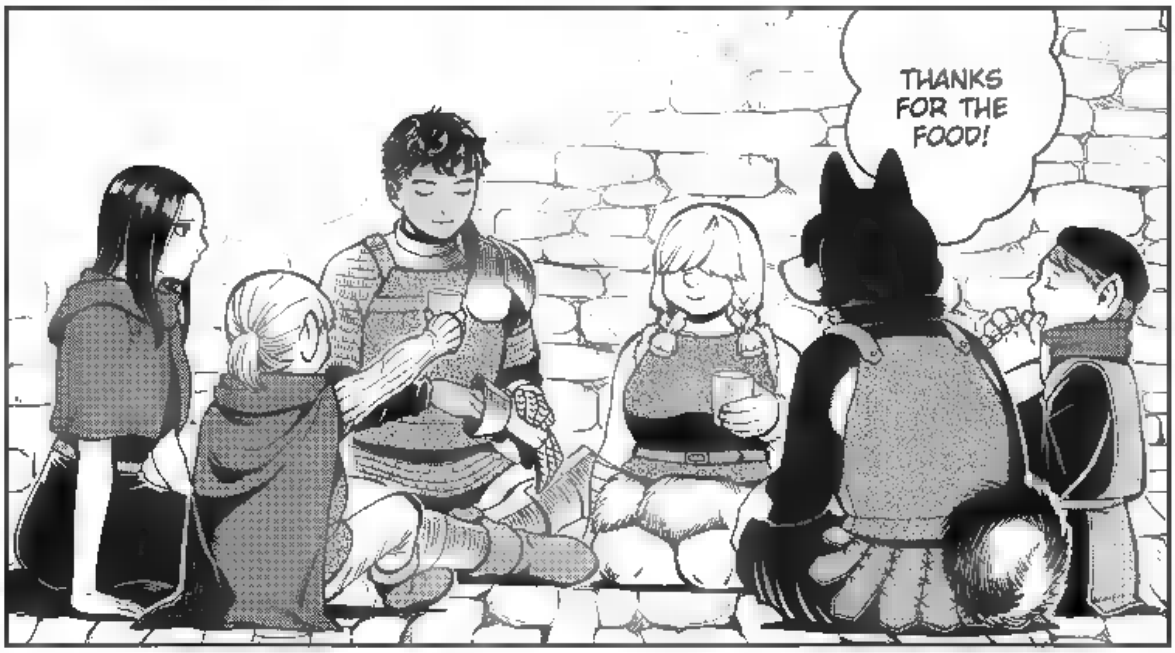
HUH!? SINK IT!?
IF WE TOOK THAT, WE'D BE JUST LIKE THEM...

KABRU! KABRU!
THOSE GUYS HAD LOTS OF VALUABLE STUFF!
GREAT.
TAKE THEIR FOOD, THEN THROW THE REST IN THE WATER.

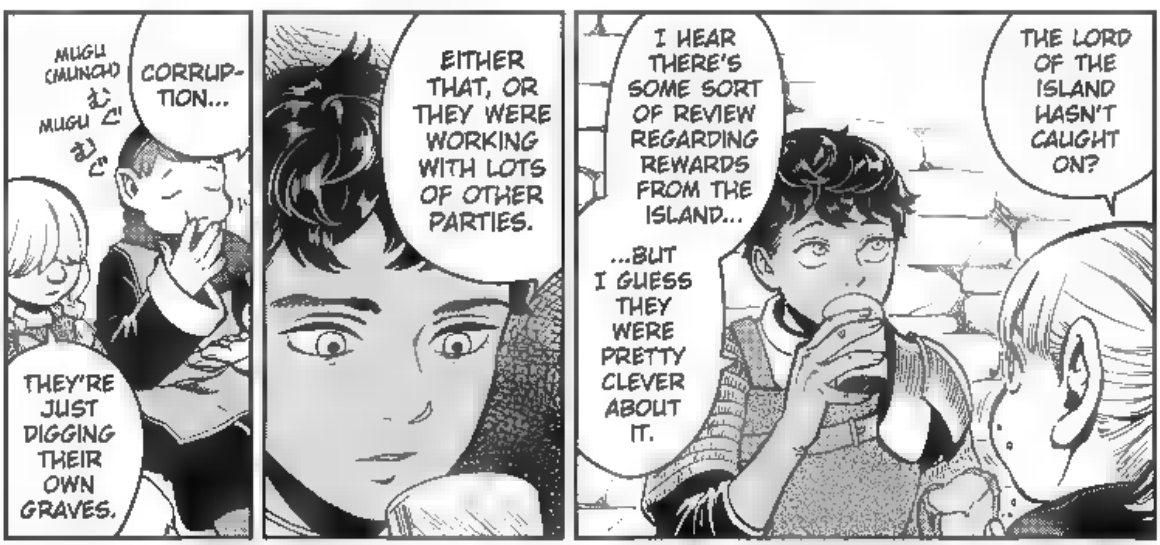
HEAR, HEAR!
ONCE THAT'S DONE...
...LET'S HAVE A SNACK.
CHAPTER 31: THE END

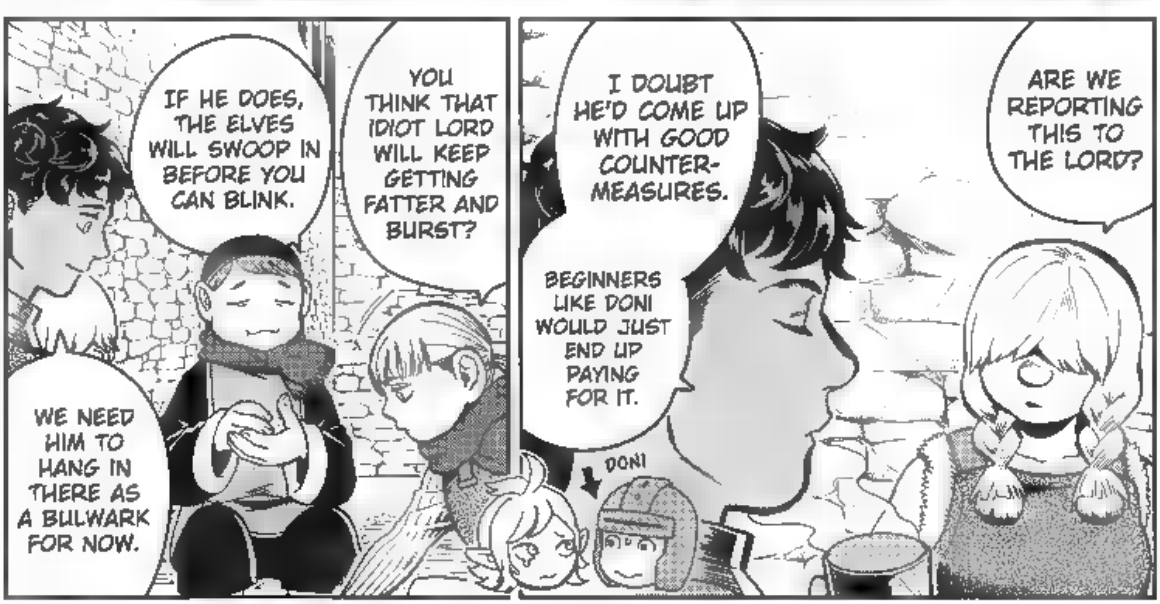
32. Sea Serpent, Part 2


Travel Rations Set for Adventurers
Salt-Cured Meat
Nuts & Dried Fruit
Bread
Wine
Energy
Vitamins
Protein
Calcium
Fat
Carbs


Thanks for the food!

SURE, IF YOU MAKE YOUR OWN CORPSES.
CORPSE RETRIEVAL PAYS WELL, DOESN'T IT?
YUM!
THEY WERE EATING GOOD STUFF.
ぱくん
PAKUN (CHOMP)
もぐ…
MOGU (CHEW)


MUGU (MUNCH)
むぐ
MUGU
むぐ
CORRUPTION...
THEY'RE JUST DIGGING THEIR OWN GRAVES.
EITHER THAT, OR THEY WERE WORKING WITH LOTS OF OTHER PARTIES.
I HEAR THERE'S SOME SORT OF REVIEW REGARDING REWARDS FROM THE ISLAND...
...BUT I GUESS THEY WERE PRETTY CLEVER ABOUT IT.
THE LORD OF THE ISLAND HASN'T CAUGHT ON?


IF HE DOES, THE ELVES WILL SWOOP IN BEFORE YOU CAN BLINK.
YOU THINK THAT IDIOT LORD WILL KEEP GETTING FATTER AND BURST?
WE NEED HIM TO HANG IN THERE AS A BULWARK FOR NOW.
I DOUBT HE'D COME UP WITH GOOD COUNTER-MEASURES.
BEGINNERS LIKE DONI WOULD JUST END UP PAYING FOR IT.
DONI
ARE WE REPORTING THIS TO THE LORD?

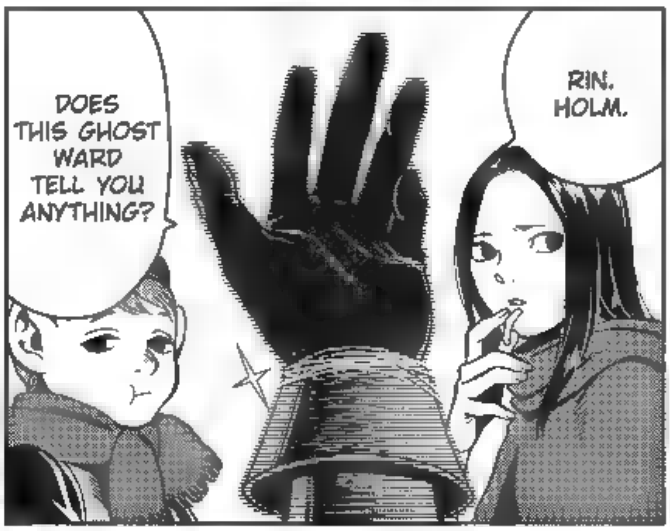
THE PARTY THAT PUT THE GHOST WARD ON US.
KUCHA (SNARF)
KUCHA
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

THE FOOD STEAL-ERS.
OH. THE JEWEL THIEVES.

...A HALF-FOOT, AND AN ELF, HM...?
STILL, A TALL-MAN, A DWARF...

I DOUBT DONI'S GROUP WOULD BE DOWN ON THE THIRD FLOOR.
FIONIL
AH!
NO! IT WASN'T FIONIL, WAS IT!?

IF WE NARROW THE FIELD A BIT, WE MAY BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THEM.
THERE AREN'T MANY PARTIES WITH ELVES IN THEM.


DOES THIS GHOST WARD TELL YOU ANYTHING?
RIN. HOLM.

PLUS, ONE OF THOSE FOUR IS A HALF-FOOT.
THAT'S A RECKLESS WAY TO EXPLORE.
THAT "PARTY OF FOUR" BIT BOTHERS ME TOO.

I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THAT SORT OF MAGIC.
PAKU (CHOMP)
...LET ME SEE.

YOU'RE STILL WEARING THAT!?
IT'S TECH-NICALLY EVIDENCE.

SHE MAY BE A MAGIC SCHOOL GRADUATE.
THOSE PEOPLE ALL WRITE SIMILAR FORMU-LAS.

...*HONOR STUDENT.*
PE (TOSS)
IT FEELS LIKE SHE DID IT BY THE BOOK.
AND IT'S NOT A SPELL SHE DOES OFTEN.

SOWA そわ
SOWA そわ
SOWA そわ
HMM.
MAGIC SCHOOL...
I SEE...

...
IT DEFINITELY WAS AN ELF WHO WROTE IT...

SOWA (FIDGET) そわ...
MAGIC... SCHOOL ...

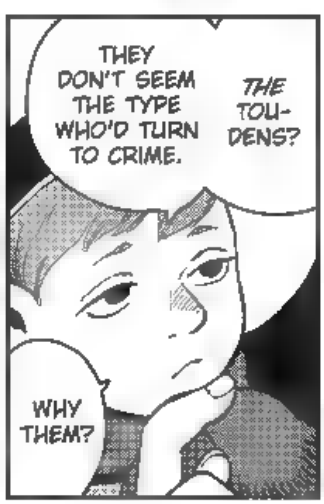
WOW, I HOPE I'M RIGHT.
IT'S ONLY A GUESS, BUT...
STILL...
WHAT? DON'T BE A SMART-ASS.

WELL...
WHAT? WHAT IS IT?
...I JUST HAD A THOUGHT.

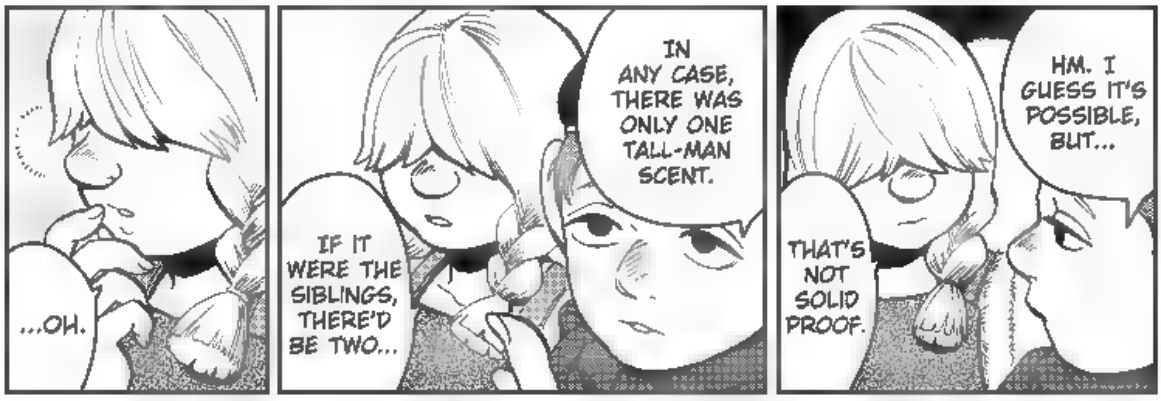
UM...
THE TOUDEN SIBLINGS' PARTY.

THE SIBLINGS ARE TALL-MEN.
BUT THE GHOST WARD WAS CAST BY AN ELF, RIGHT?

.....
FIRST!
THE TOUDEN SISTER GRADUATED FROM MAGIC SCHOOL!


THEY DON'T SEEM THE TYPE WHO'D TURN TO CRIME.
THE TOU-DENS?
WHY THEM?

MAGIC SCHOOL GRADUATES ARE RARE AROUND HERE.
ESPE-CIALLY ELVES.
SO... I THOUGHT MAYBE THEY'D GONE TO THE SAME MAGIC SCHOOL.
YOU CUT THEM YOURSELF AGAIN!?
THE ELF IN THEIR PARTY SEEMED REALLY CLOSE TO THE SISTER.
AS IF THEY'D BEEN FRIENDS SINCE THEY WERE SMALL.
HANG ON.
JUST HEAR ME OUT.

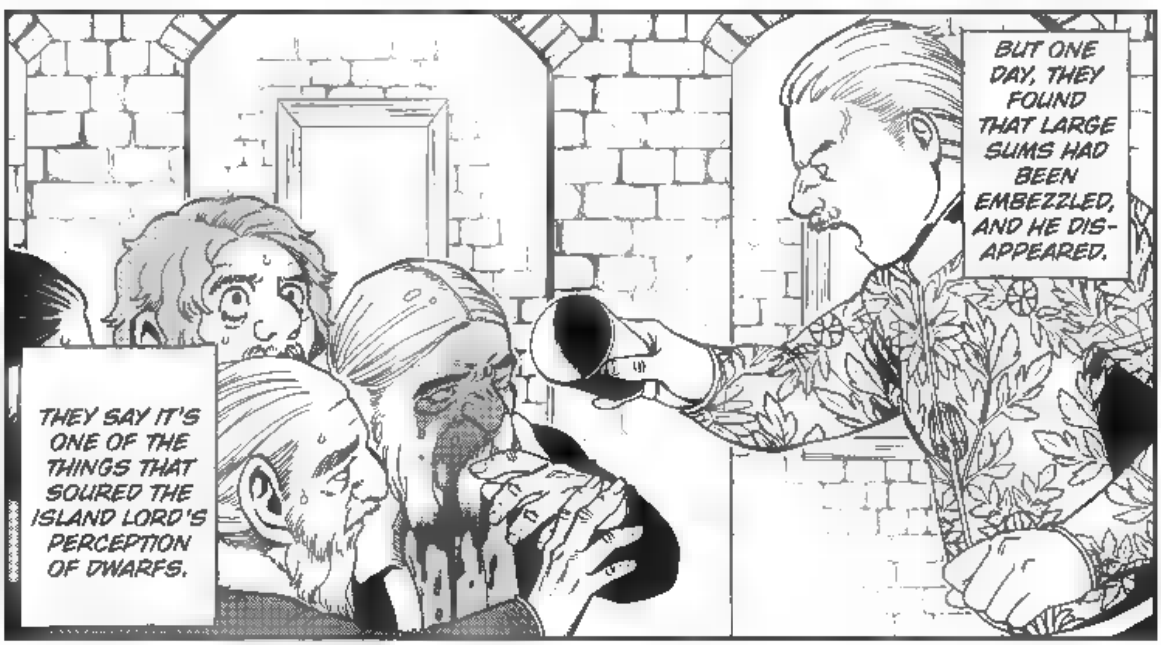

...OH.
IF IT WERE THE SIBLINGS, THERE'D BE TWO...
IN ANY CASE, THERE WAS ONLY ONE TALL-MAN SCENT.
THAT'S NOT SOLID PROOF.
HM. I GUESS IT'S POSSIBLE, BUT...

EXACTLY!
THAT'S WHY THEY'RE GOING IN RECKLESSLY WITH SUCH A SMALL GROUP!?
DON'T TELL ME...

WHAT?
I THINK SO...
...BECAUSE WE JUST PASSED ONE OF THEM.
THEY LOST EITHER THE BROTHER OR THE SISTER ...
...AND THEN FOUGHT ABOUT WHETHER TO GO RESCUE THEM.
THIS IS STARTING TO SOUND PLAUSIBLE.
ISN'T IT!?
SEVERAL OF THEIR PARTY MAY HAVE LEFT OVER THIS.
THAT PUT THEM IN A BIND, SO THEY TOOK OUR JEWELS AND FOOD...
THEY'VE BEEN ARGUING ABOUT GOALS AND REVENUE FOR A WHILE.
THEY STILL HAVE A DWARF.
ISN'T THAT WEIRD, THEN?
THEY MIGHT HAVE HIRED A NEW ONE.
KUN (SNIFF) KUN
IT REALLY SMELLED.
HM? BUT YOU SAID YOU SMELLED A DWARF TOO, KURO.
I DID.

THE TALL-MEN ARE LAIOS AND FALIN.
THEN THERE'S SHURO, WHO'S PROBABLY AN EASTERNER.
WHO ELSE IS IN THAT PARTY?
LET'S SEE.
NAMARI, THE DWARF WE JUST SAW.
THE HALF-FOOT IS "CHILCHUCK," OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
MARCILLE THE ELF.
IF IT IS THE TOUDEN SIBLINGS' PARTY...
...THEN ONE SIBLING, SHURO, AND NAMARI ARE GONE...
...AND THEY'VE ADDED ONE NEW DWARF...
...I THINK.

THE WEAPONS DEALER?
HE USED TO MANAGE THE ISLAND'S WEAPONS DISTRIBUTION.
JUST THE NAME. SHE'S FAMOUS.
THE ONLY DAUGHTER OF A MAN THEY CALL "THE WEAPONS DEALER."
HM.
I SEE. SO THAT WAS NAMARI.
DO YOU KNOW SOMETHING, DAYA?


THEY SAY IT'S ONE OF THE THINGS THAT SOURED THE ISLAND LORD'S PERCEPTION OF DWARFS.
BUT ONE DAY, THEY FOUND THAT LARGE SUMS HAD BEEN EMBEZZLED, AND HE DISAPPEARED.

IT SMELLED LIKE BAD NEWS.
SO MAYBE IT'S NOT A DECENT DWARF.
BOFU (WHUMP)

LOTS OF DWARFS HAD A HARD TIME BECAUSE OF THAT...
ME TOO.
I DOUBT ANY DECENT DWARF WOULD TAKE HER SPOT IN THE PARTY.

MONEY
MONEY
MONEY
HE'S LIKE, "WHEN YOU MAKE CONTRACTS, GO THROUGH THE GUILD.
"AND THEN PAY ME A BROKER'S FEE."
HE'S A GREEDY JERK!

I KNOW ABOUT THAT CHILCHUCK GUY TOO.
HE'S AN OLD GEEZER.
HE ACTS LIKE HE'S THE REP FOR ALL THE ISLAND'S HALF-FOOTS.

なでこ NADEKO
なでこ NADEKO (PET)
YOU'RE SO RIGHT!
IF I HADN'T TAKEN YOU IN, YOU'D BE OUT ON THE STREETS RIGHT NOW!

MIK GIVES ME FOOD.
YOU WANT TO WORK FOR ME, RIGHT, KURO?
YOU'D HATE THAT, RIGHT?
SHE'S A GOOD BOSS!

I TOLD HIM I'M NOT JOINING ANY SUCH THING AND RAN OFF.
I MEAN, IF THEY KNEW I'D HIRED A KOBOLD, THEY'D COME TO "HAVE A TALK" WITH ME.

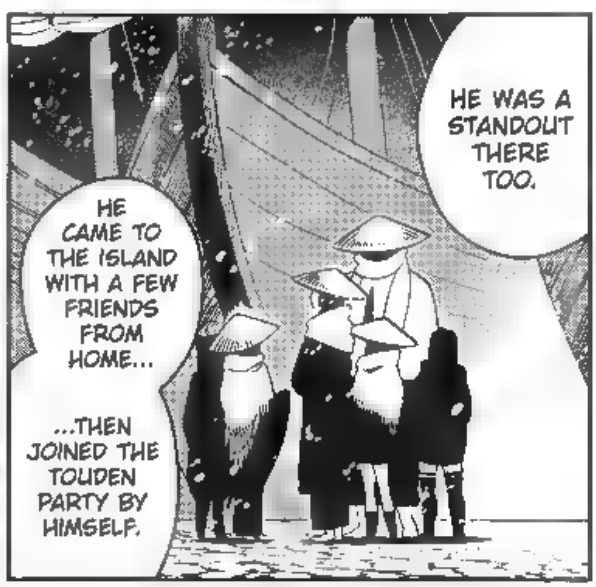
E HEE HEE!
YOU SHOULDN'T SAY THINGS LIKE THAT BASED ON SPECULATION.
HOLM.
...I BET KURO'S BEING WORKED LIKE A DOG FOR PEANUTS.

AND BESIDES, I WAS BORN HERE.
SOME PLACES DON'T EVEN SPEAK THE SAME LANGUAGE.
"SHURO" ISN'T A NAME FROM MY ISLAND.

—IN THAT CASE, I MAY KNOW MORE THAN YOU.

SO THAT EASTERN TALL-MAN...
HE'S FROM YOUR AREA, RIGHT, RIN?
LISTEN...
DO YOU KNOW HIM?
...DON'T LUMP ALL EASTERNERS TOGETHER.

HE SEEMED PRETTY SHADY.
HE TOOK ON THE DUNGEON TO TEST HIS SKILLS.


HE WAS A STANDOUT THERE TOO.
HE CAME TO THE ISLAND WITH A FEW FRIENDS FROM HOME...
...THEN JOINED THE TOUDEN PARTY BY HIMSELF.

...NO, PROBABLY NOT.
BUTSU (MUTTER)
BUTSU
DID THEY LOSE BOTH THE SIBLINGS, AND HE STAYED?

HE DIDN'T LOOK LIKE HE'D CARE ABOUT REWARDS OR DANGER...
SO HE LEFT THE PARTY, HUH?

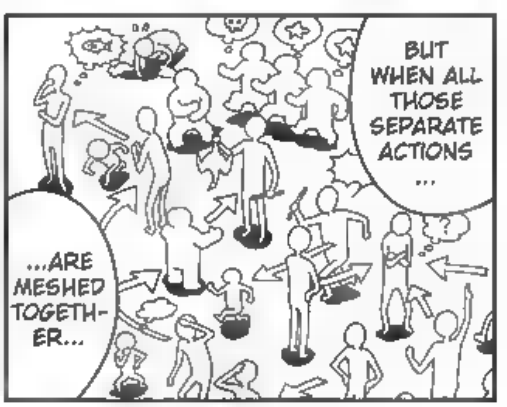
PA (BEAM)
BECAUSE I AM!
THIS IS LOTS OF FUN!

WHY DO YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE ENJOYING THIS?

IT'S A HOBBY.
KABRU, YOU REMEMBER SO MUCH ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE THAT IT'S CREEPY.

...IT BECOMES A HISTORIC EVENT INVOLVING LOTS AND LOTS OF PEOPLE.

THERE ARE TONS OF PEOPLE ON THIS ISLAND...
...AND THEY'RE ALL ACTING FOR THEIR OWN REASONS.


BUT WHEN ALL THOSE SEPARATE ACTIONS ...
...ARE MESHED TOGETHER...

I REALLY HOPE IT'S THE TOUDEN SIBLINGS' PARTY.
SOWA (FIDGET)
SOWA
AFTER ALL...

I THOUGHT THIS WAS A BORING CASE OF THEFT...
...BUT I'VE GOT A HUNCH THAT SOMETHING INTERESTING'S GOING TO HAPPEN.

...I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR AGES...
...FOR SOMEBODY TO UNMASK THEM.
LONG AGO, I HEAR THEY WORKED ■ A BAND OF GOLD-PEELERS.
THEY GAVE MOST OF THEIR EARNINGS TO SICK ■ INJURED COMPANIONS WHO COULDN'T GO INTO THE DUNGEON ANYMORE.
YOU'VE GOT A BONE TO PICK WITH THEM?
THEY DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO ME.
AAAH.
YES. IT'S AN ADMIRABLE STORY.
BUT THERE'S MORE TO IT.
HUH.
SOUNDS GOOD TO ME.
BORI CRUNCH
BORI

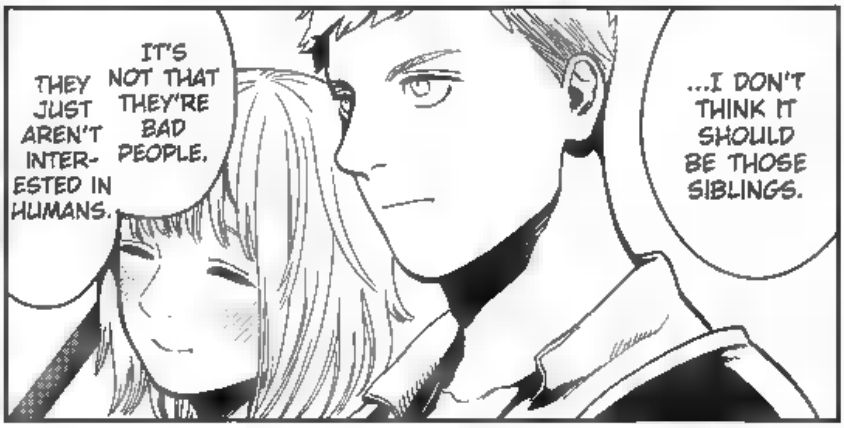
IN THE END, THEY NEVER WENT BACK TO ADVENTURING.
NOW, THEY SELL ILLEGALLY MANUFACTURED GOODS ON THE ISLAND.

THEIR COMPANIONS HAD HEALED UP AGES AGO, BUT THEY TOOK THE MONEY ANYWAY.

...THE DUNGEON ITSELF IS A RELIC OF THE ANCIENT ELVES.
HOWEVER, EVEN IF YOU AREN'T REALLY GIVEN EVERYTHING...
THERE'S NO DOUBT THAT YOU'D GAIN GREAT INFLUENCE.
AND SO...

"THE ONE TO DEFEAT THE LORD OF THE DUNGEON WILL BE GIVEN EVERYTHING."
THEY SAY THE MAN WHO WAS KING OF THIS COUNTRY SAID SO.

JUST LIKE THE ISLAND'S LORD.


THEY JUST AREN'T INTERESTED IN HUMANS.
IT'S NOT THAT THEY'RE BAD PEOPLE.
...I DON'T THINK IT SHOULD BE THOSE SIBLINGS.

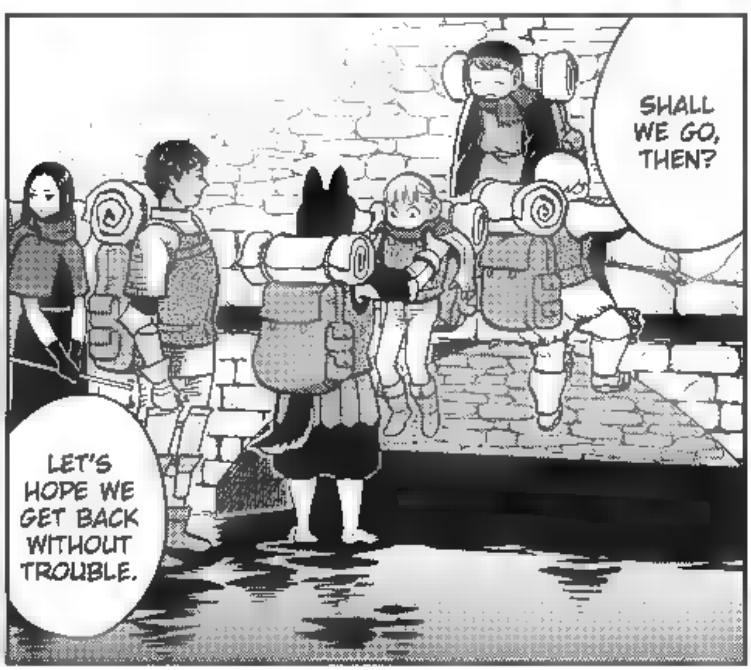
AND TO OUST THAT STUPID LORD OF THE ISLAND TOO.

WE KNOW, KABRU.
WE THINK YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO'S FIT TO LEAD.

IF WE REPORTED THE THEFT, COULDN'T WE RUN THOSE MEN OFF THE ISLAND?
WE'D HAVE TO STAKE OUT THE TOWN AND CATCH THEM WITH THE GOODS.

WELL, IF WE'RE STILL HAVING TROUBLE WITH RANDOM MONSTERS, WE'VE STILL GOT A LONG WAY TO GO.
YOU'RE RIGHT.

チャプ
CHAPU (PLISH)


SHALL WE GO, THEN?
LET'S HOPE WE GET BACK WITHOUT TROUBLE.

DON'T LET THEM DISTRACT YOU!!
WATCH WHAT'S UNDER YOUR FEET—

PA (PATT)
PA
LOOK OUT!
BLADE FISH!
PA
PA
.....

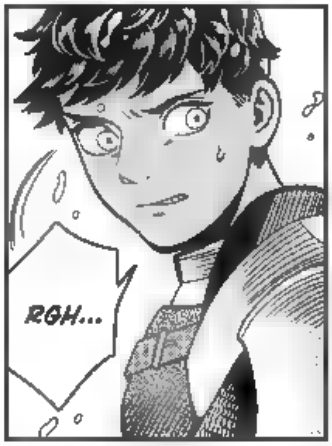
AGH!
ミシャ
PASHA (SPLASH)

もお
GUMOO
(SWELL)

A KRA—
NO, A SEA SERPENT!!
ZA (SPLSH)
ZA
DON (BOOM)
MMPH!
RIN!
GET BA—

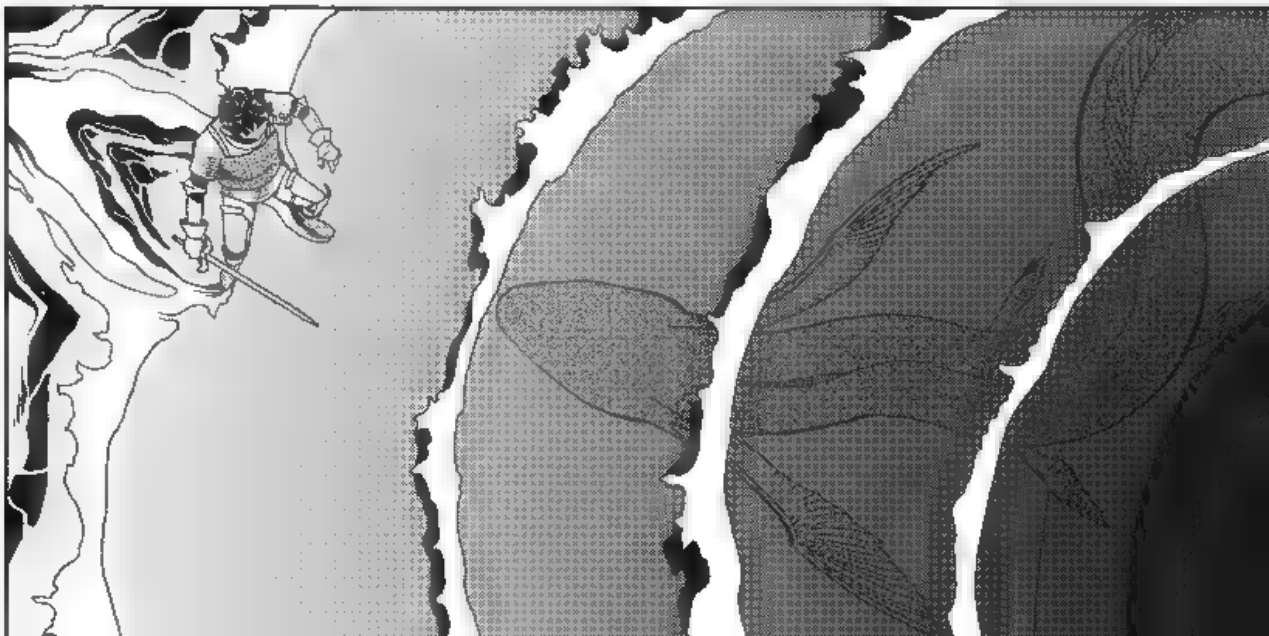
BOYON
(BOING)
ボヨン
.....
.....

CHANT...

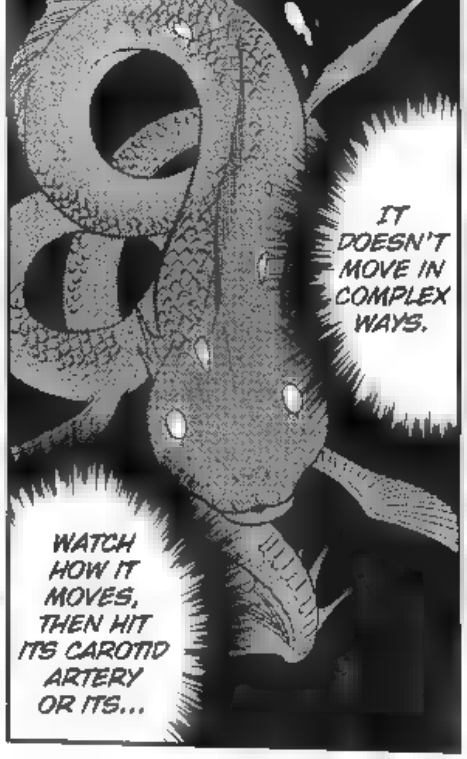

RGH...

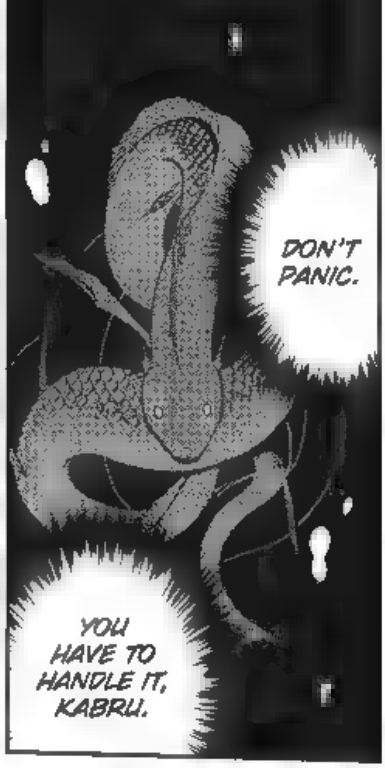
BUORUN
BORURURURUN
ボルルルルン
ブォルン
I CAN'T BRING "HER" OUT WHEN IT'S LIKE THIS!
WEIRD STUFF WOULD GET MIXED IN.
ブォルン
BUORUN
(BLORP)

...
HOLM!



WAIT. WHERE IS ITS CAROTID ARTERY?

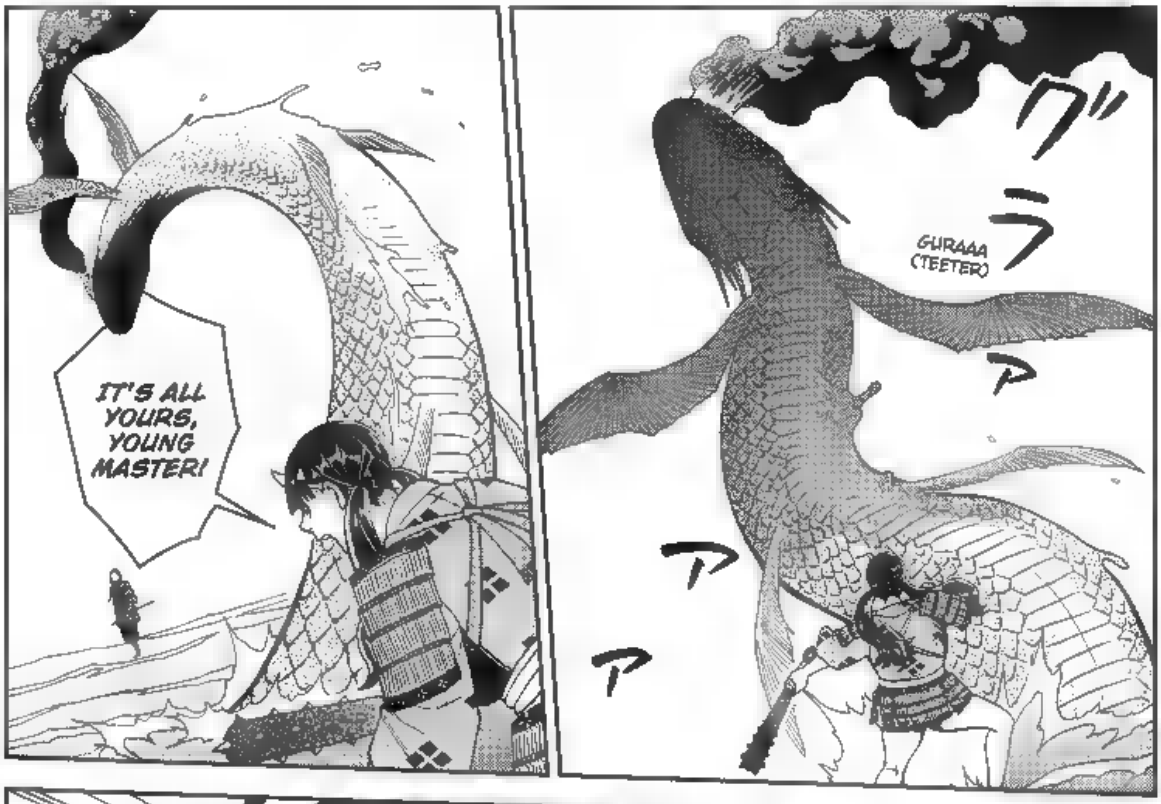

IT DOESN'T MOVE IN COMPLEX WAYS.
WATCH HOW IT MOVES, THEN HIT ITS CAROTID ARTERY OR ITS...

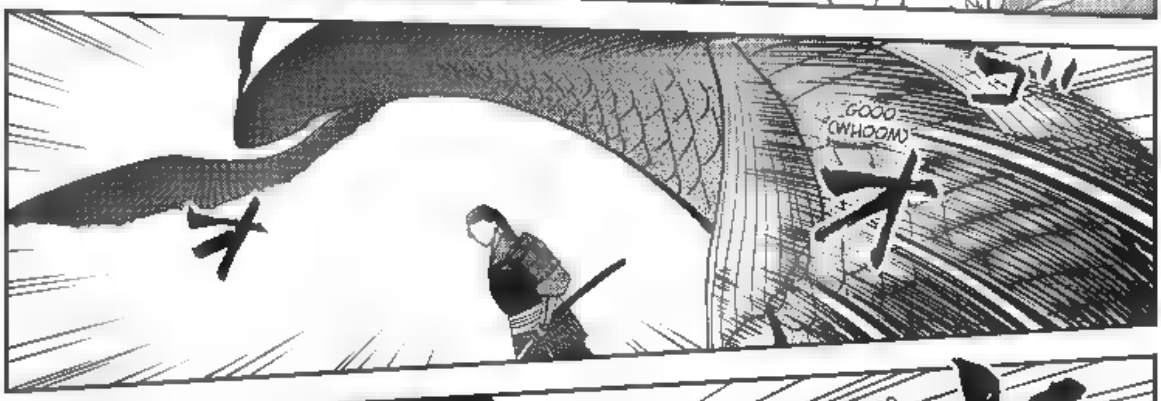

DON'T PANIC.
YOU HAVE TO HANDLE IT, KABRU.

'SCUSE ME.
TON (TMP)

SHU (WHIP)
PAAAN (BLAM)

YUP-YUP!
TADE!
GULI (TENSE)
DOGOO (WHUUDD)


IT'S ALL YOURS, YOUNG MASTER!
GURAAA (TEETER)
グラ
ア
ア
ア


GOOO (WHOOM)
ゴー
オ
オ

OOO (WHOOSH)
オ
オ
オ

ツ
TSU (SST)
チン
CHIN (TING)
ドボ
DOBO (BLOOSH)
ドボン
DOBON

WERE YOUR CLOTHES SOILED?
THAT WAS SPLENDID.
PHEW!
NO.
PASHA (SPLASH)
YOUNG MASTER!!
NO NEED.
YOU MUST BE TIRED.
SOME TEA?
WHY DON'T WE HAVE OUR MEAL HERE?
WE'RE IN A HURRY.
SFX: GUUURURURU (GURGLE)
TADE'S SUPER-HUNGRY NOW.
HE'S COMPLETELY SMITTEN WITH THAT NORTHERN GIRL.
HE'S A TROUBLE-SOME MASTER.
CHANGE OF PLANS.
HUH?
KABRU? ARE YOU HURT?
ARE YOU AN IDIOT?
WOULDN'T THIS BE YUMMY IF WE STEWED IT WITH RADISHES?

THANK YOU FOR HELPING ME WHEN I WAS IN DANGER.
I'M KABRU.
MAY I ASK YOUR NAME?

EXCUSE ME.

IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN ...
...ARE YOU SEARCHING FOR A WOMAN?

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
I'M JUST PASSING THROUGH.

MY...!

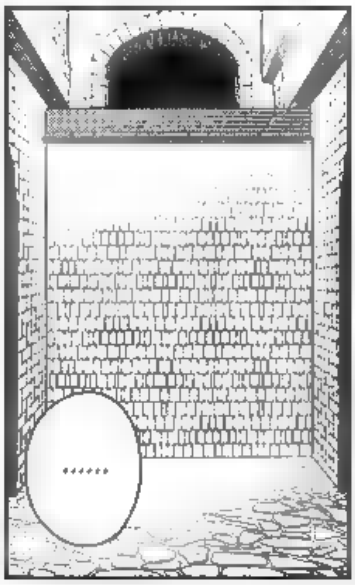
D-DO YOU KNOW SOME-THING!?
AH. I WAS RIGHT.
YOU HAVE MY SYM-PATHY.

BA CTURND

.....!
I MAY BE OF SOME ASSISTANCE ...
...IN YOUR SEARCH FOR MISS FALIN TOUDEN.
HONESTLY! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH IT?
HEY! KURO! I TOLD YOU NOT TO MAKE THAT FACE.
IT'S SCARY.
GRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

33. Dryad

YOU GUYS...
I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU.
TWO FULL DAYS AFTER DECIDING TO RETURN TO THE SURFACE ...
... LAIOS AND COMPANY WERE ...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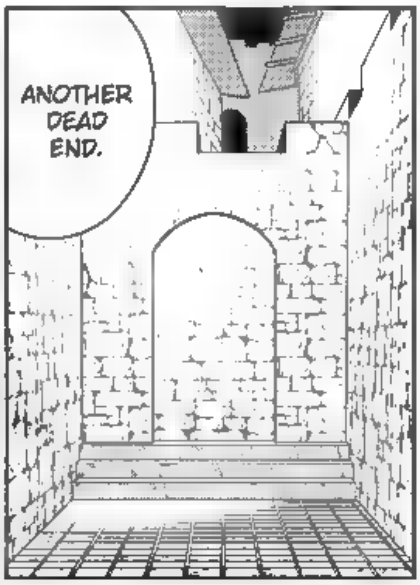
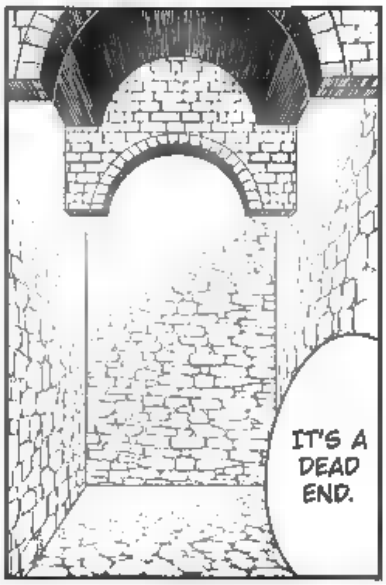

ANOTHER DEAD END.

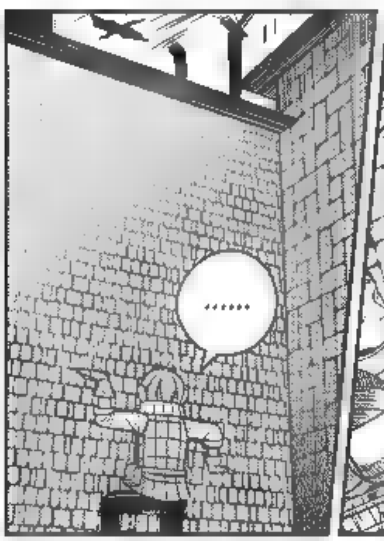

IT'S A DEAD END.

...LOST, AND NEAR DEATH.
I'M HUNGRY...
I'M SLEEPY...
I'M THIRSTY...

ZU
ZU (RUMBLE)
WHOA!
ANOTHER EARTH-QUAKE?
DAMN IT! WHAT GIVES !?
DAN (SLAM)
THIS WALL WAS NOT HERE LAST TIME WE CAME THROUGH.
I BET IT'S THE MAGICIAN'S DOING.
SHE MAY BE ON HER GUARD AGAINST US.
IT'S NOT AN EARTH-QUAKE.
THE DUNGEON IS MOVING, CHANGING ITS SHAPE.
PATATA (FLUTTER)
HUP!
HANG ON A SECOND.
SOWA (FIDGET)
SOWA
YOU MEAN SHE'S MAKING US WANDER IN CIRCLES FOREVER?
LET'S TRY MIXING IT UP, THEN.

BASA
(FLAP)

I THINK IT'S GONE.
BERI
(PEEL)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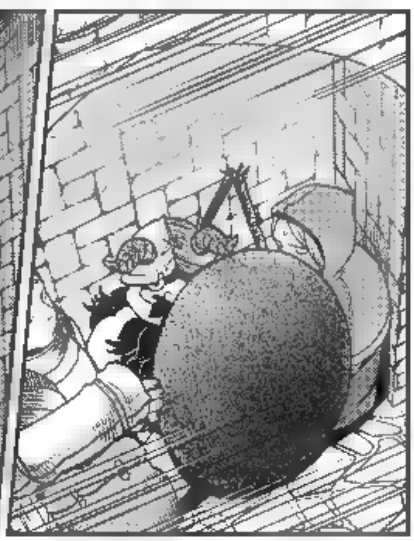
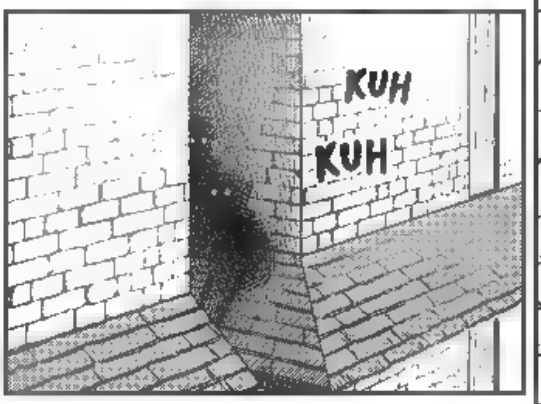
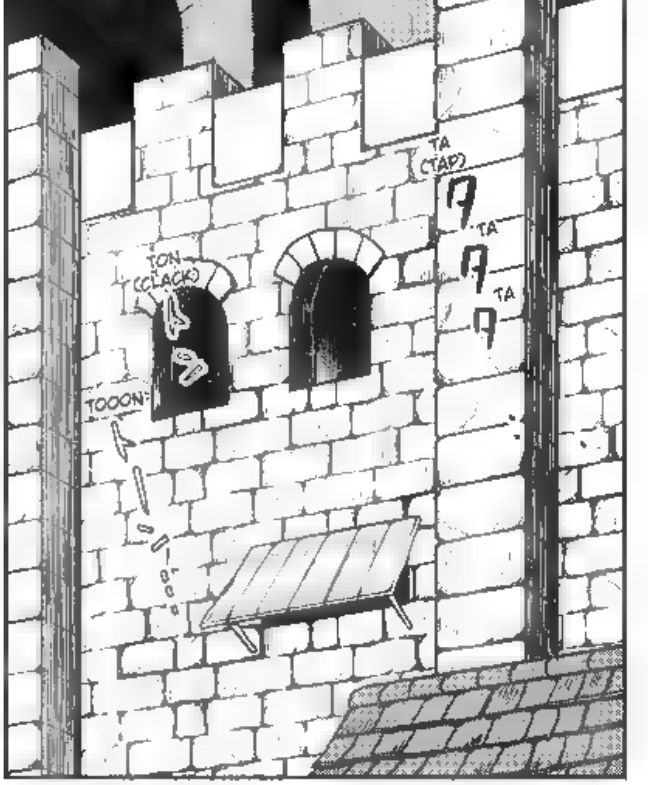


STILL, SOMEHOW, THE TOWN SEEMS TO BE...

GOING OVER THE WALL MAY NOT BE WISE.
SO WE SHOULD KEEP LOOKING FOR A PATH?


KUH
KUH

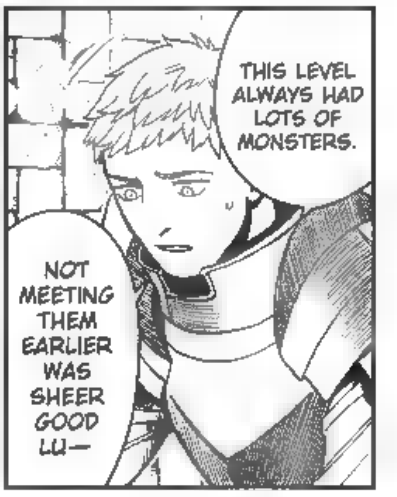
HYEH
HEH
HYEH

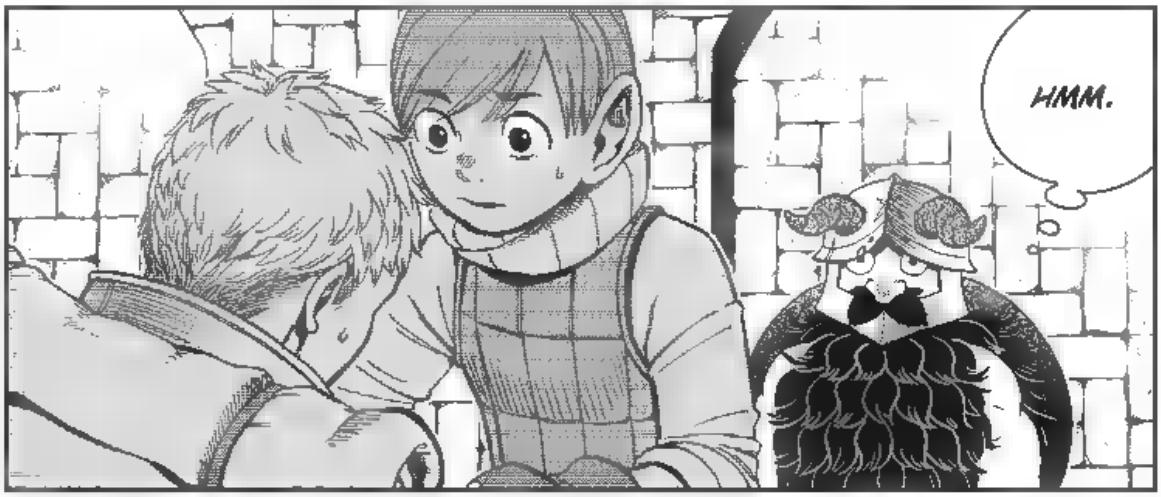

TA (TAP)
TA
TA
TON (CLACK)
TOOON

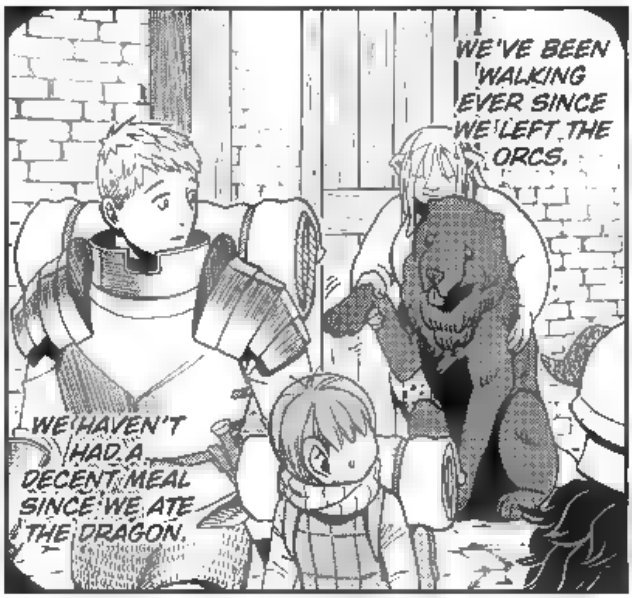
THE RED DRAGON'S DEAD, SO THE MONSTERS THAT WERE HIDING HAVE COME OUT.
...SLOWLY GETTING LIVELIER.

DO (WHUD)
MUGYU (SQUISH)
H-HEY!

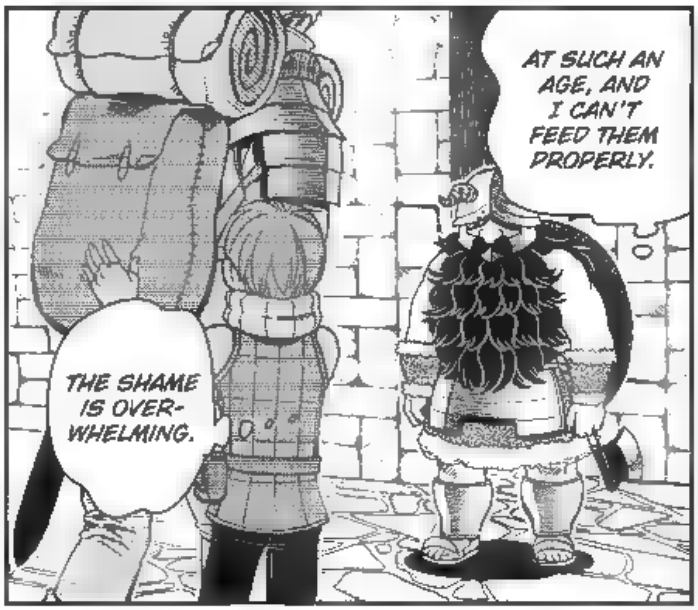
ZUK!! (BANG)
GH...


THIS LEVEL ALWAYS HAD LOTS OF MONSTERS.
NOT MEETING THEM EARLIER WAS SHEER GOOD LU—

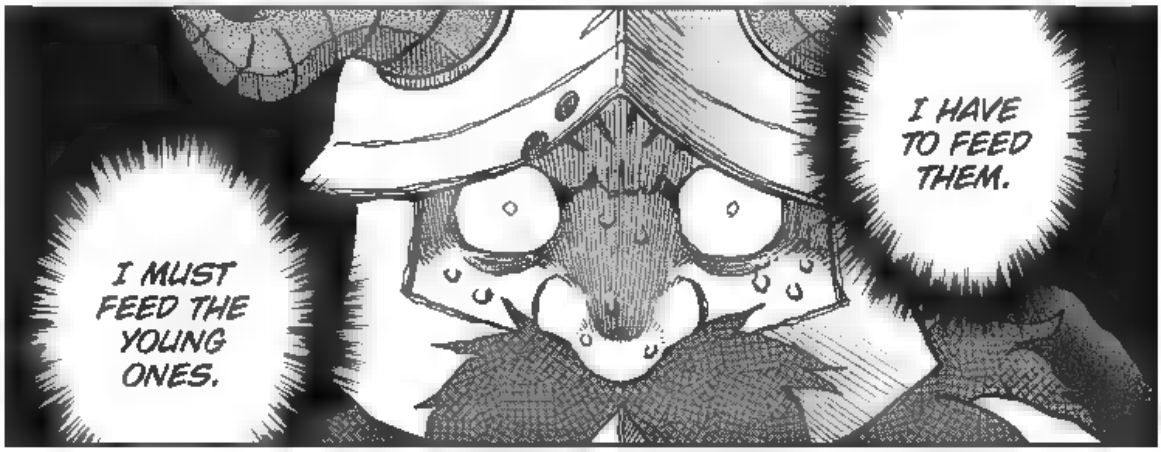

HMM.

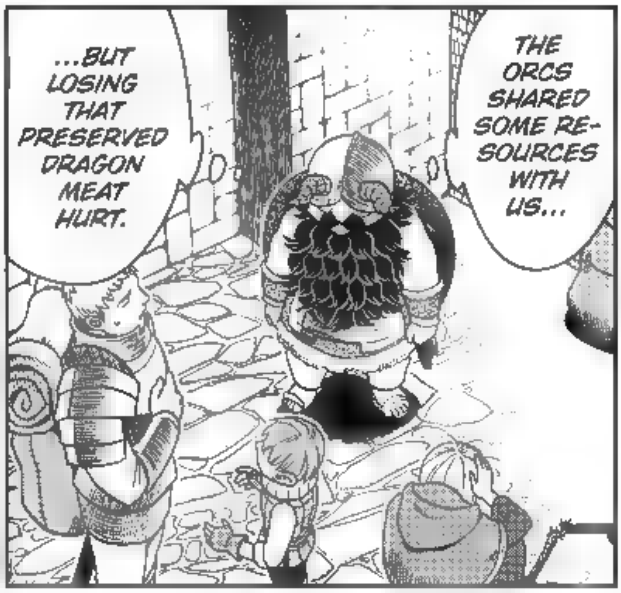

WE'VE BEEN WALKING EVER SINCE WE LEFT THE ORCS.
WE HAVEN'T HAD A DECENT MEAL SINCE WE ATE THE DRAGON.

THIS ISN'T HEALTHY.


AT SUCH AN AGE, AND I CAN'T FEED THEM PROPERLY.
THE SHAME IS OVER-WHELMING.

IS HE YOUNG OR FULL-GROWN?
I CAN'T REALLY TELL LAIOS'S AGE...
...BUT CHILCHUCK AND MARCILLE ARE PROBABLY STILL GROWING.
THIS IS GOOD.


I MUST FEED THE YOUNG ONES.
I HAVE TO FEED THEM.

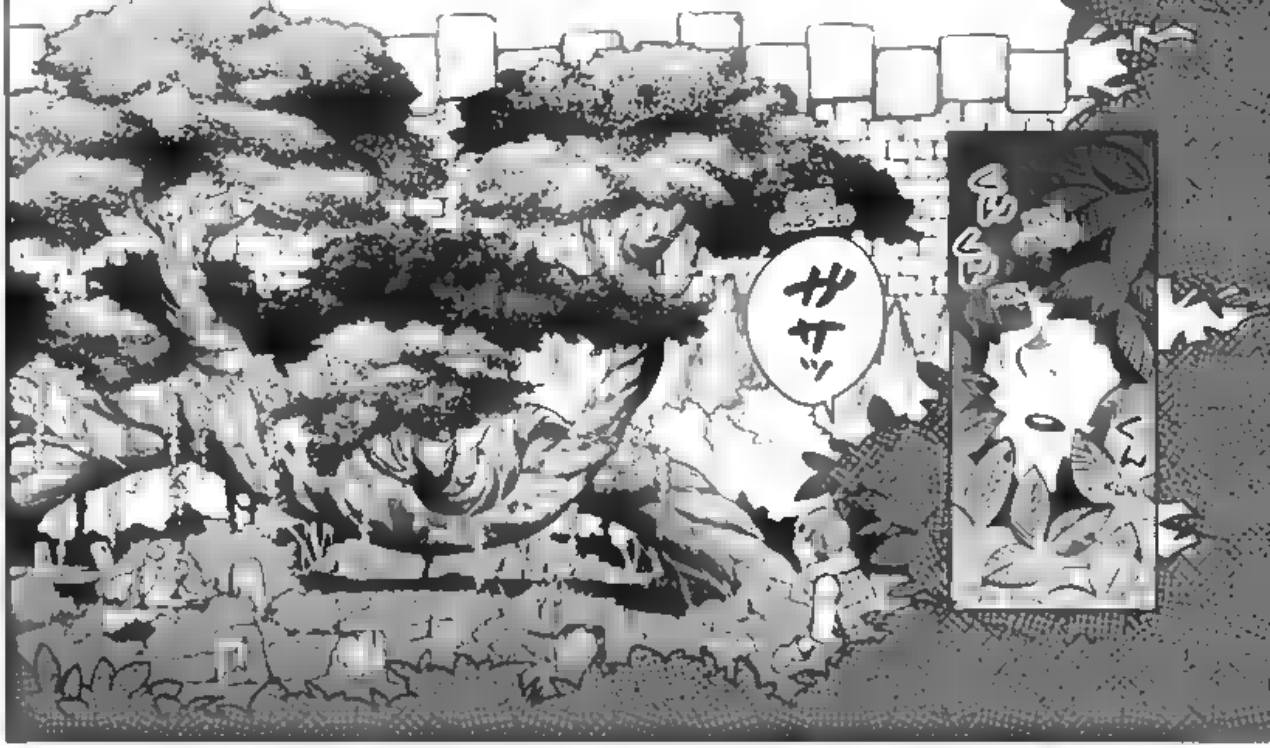

...BUT LOSING THAT PRESERVED DRAGON MEAT HURT.
THE ORCS SHARED SOME RE-SOURCES WITH US...

FIND IT, CHIL!
WHERE FLOWERS BLOOM, THERE'S WATER...
I'M ON IT!

IS IT FOOD?
KUN (SNIFF)
...SOME-THING SWEET.
KUN

!
NO. MORE LIKE FLOWERS.

HM?
HIKU (TWITCH)
I SMELL...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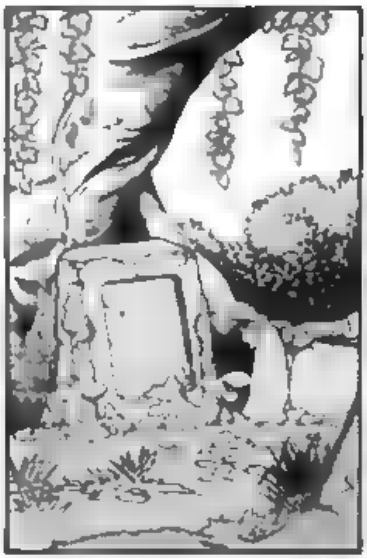
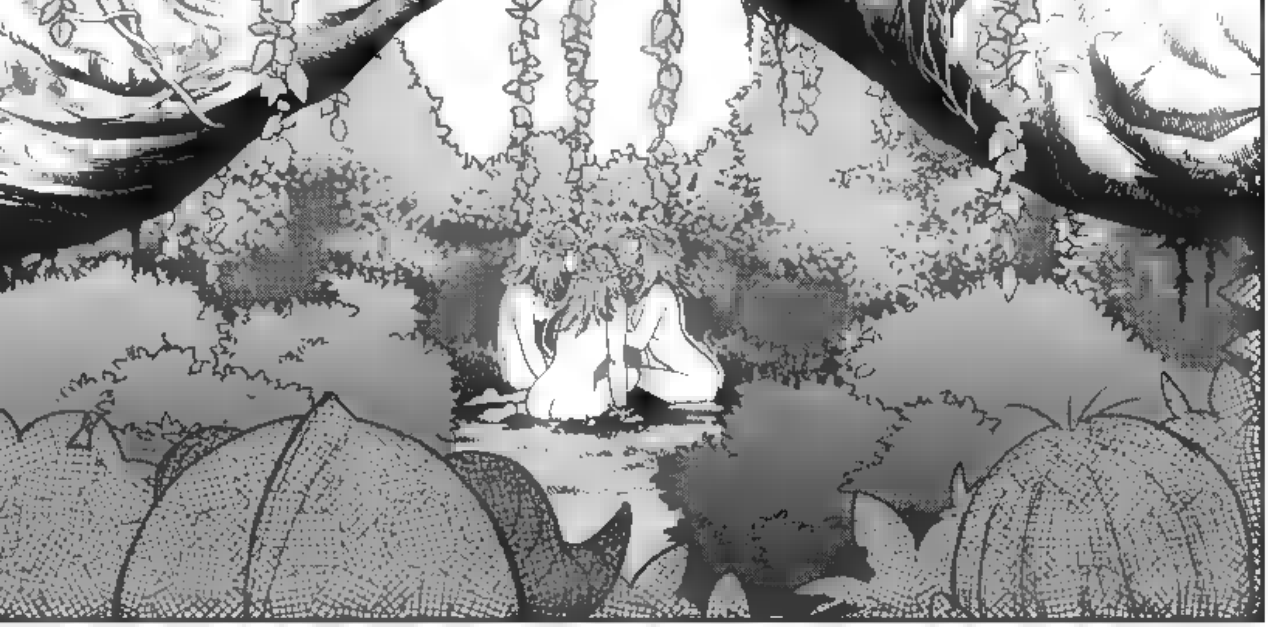
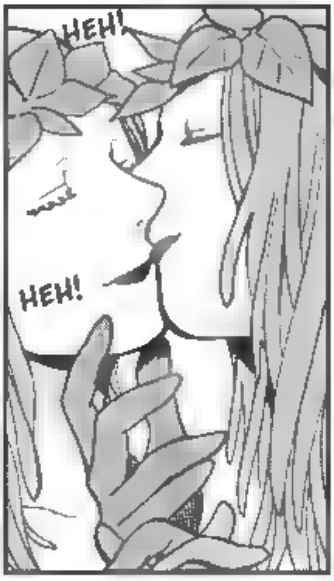


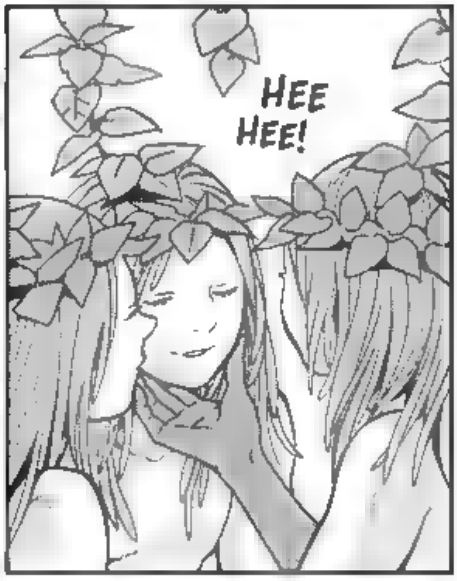
HAH...
WAIT. SOMEBODY'S HERE.

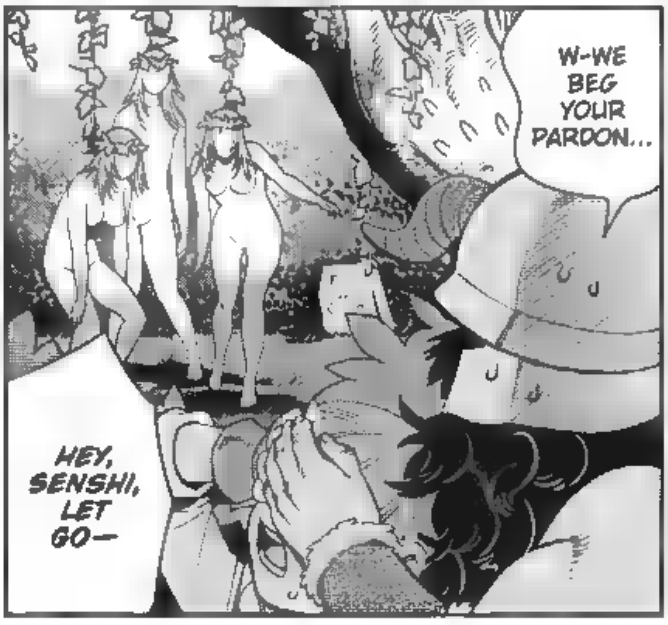
IS IT A GRAVEYARD OR SOMETHING?
THIS PLACE...

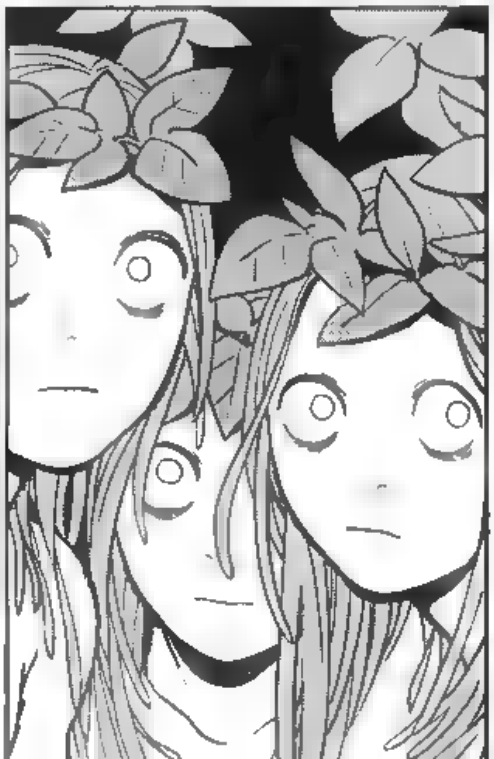


DON'T LOOK !!
BA (GRAB)
AH!?


HEH!
HEH!


HEE HEE!

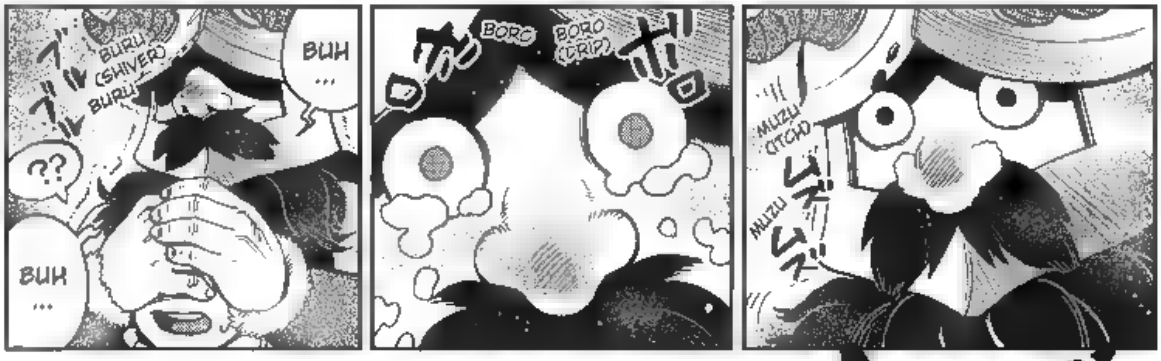

W-WE BEG YOUR PARDON...
HEY, SENSHI, LET GO—



WHOA !?
BA-CPWOOMU

DON'T (SHUNKO)
TCH!
GET BACK, SENSHI !!
MMPF!
THEY'RE DRYAD FLOW-ERS!
KOFF!
THEY'RE NOT HUMAN!
DRAW YOUR WEAP-ON!
WHAT WAS THAT!?
PTOO!
PTOO!

THE BODY RECOGNIZES THESE PARTICLES, LABELS THEM "HARMFUL" ...
...MOBILIZES ITS IMMUNE SYSTEM, AND SWIFTLY ACTS TO EXPEL THEM.
THESE ULTRA-FINE PARTICLES ENTER THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM...
...THEN CLING TO THE MUCUS MEMBRANES.
THEN THIS FLUID IS...
IT'S NOT A LIQUID.


BURU (SHIVER) BURU
??
BUH ...
BUH ...
BORO
BORO (DRIP)
MUZU (ITCH)
MUZU

IT'S WHAT THEY CALL "HAY FEVER."
BUAAAACHOO!

WACHOO
HACHOO
DWEECHOO
DRYAD POLLEN, HUH!?
GURU (WRAP)
NOT GOOD. DON'T BREATHE IT, SENSHI.

BWAAA-CHOO!
DWEE-CHOO!
ACHOO!
WHOA! WHAT!? GROSS!
AH! OW!

HAAA
HAAA

HAAAGY...
HAA...
I CAN'T BREATHE ...

MY WHOLE BODY ITCHES SO MUCH IT BURNS.
BARI
BARI (SCRATCH)

HEY, HEY! THIS IS BAD.
THE TEARS WON'T STOP.

WAUGH!
DON!
(BAM)
SHA
(FWISH)

DAMN IT.
HFF!
HFF!
HFF!
MY EYES ARE GETTING ...

KENSUKE...
KENSUKE...
LAIOSI

GET UP AND SNAP OUT OF IT, SENSHI.
BWEH.

GIRI
ONE...
TWO, AND...
GIRI
GIRI
(KRNCH)

...SENSHI.
STRETCH OUT YOUR HAND.
ON MY SIGNAL, SLASH BEHIND YOU WITH IT.

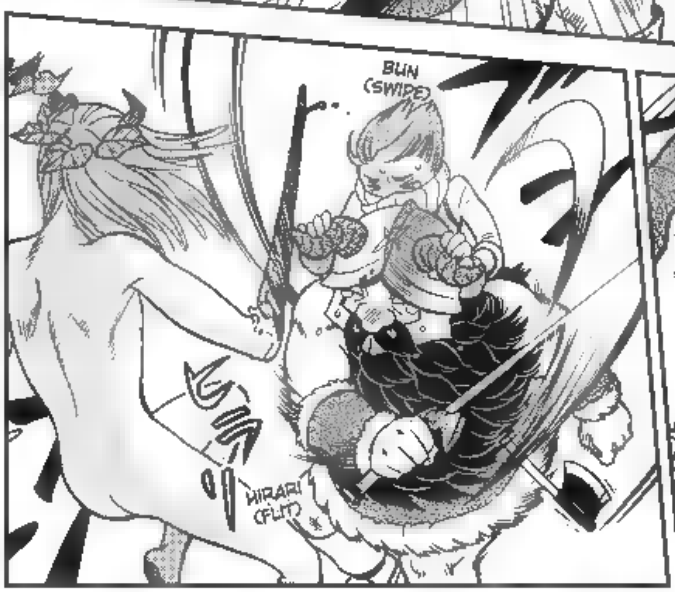
THREE!!
BASA (FWISH)
HNRGH!
BA (FOOM)

ぼお
BOO (HAZY)
MY VISION IS...

ごし
GOSHI (RUB)
CRUD.
MY EYES ARE ITCHING NOW TOO.

A...
UHOOO!

ZU (SHUNK)


BUN (SWIPE)
HIRARI (FLIT)

GHK ...!
ZU (GRIT)

HYU
HYU (WHIP)
DO
DO
DO (THUD)
HYU
SENSHI, RUN FOR IT!
I CAN'T!
I HAVE TO PROTECT THE YOUNG PEOPLE.
WHAT'S THAT SUP-POSED TO...
YOU BE MY EYES, CHIL-CHUCK.
I CAN'T. I CAN'T SEE A THING.
ALL YOUR SENSES ARE SHARP, AREN'T THEY?
.....
ZUBI (SNIFF)

FU CHUSH

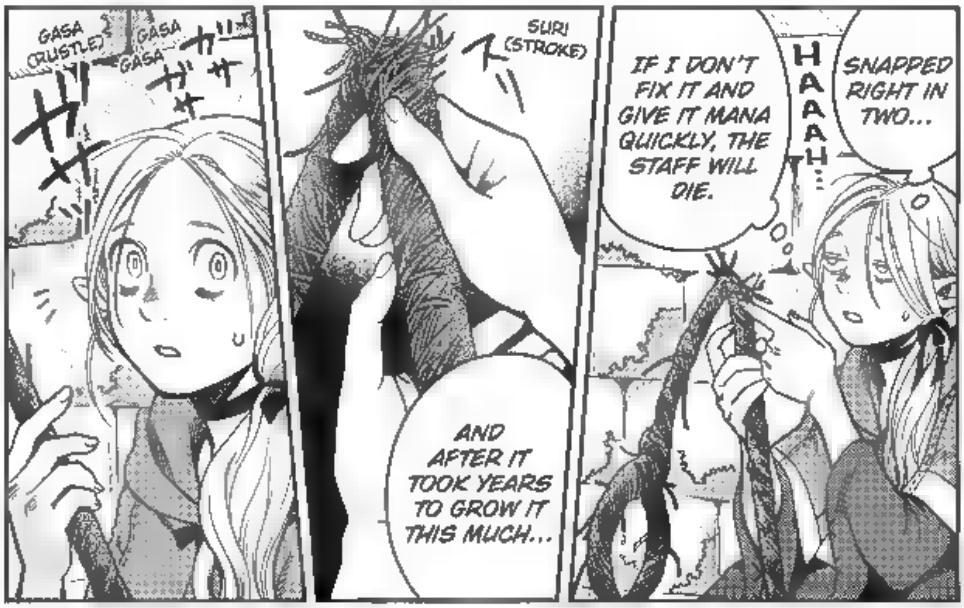
SWACH
AND SOUND... SENSHI'S SNEEZES ARE NOISY!!
I CAN'T TRUST MY EYES, NOSE, OR EARS...

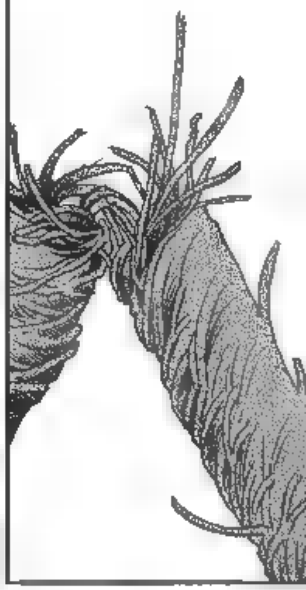
SMELL...
IT'S NO GOOD. THE SCENT OF THE POLLEN IS TOO STRONG.

WIND!

IT AVOIDED YOUR SNEEZE AND DODGED BEHIND YOU TO THE RIGHT!
SWING UP JUST LIKE THAT, SENSHI!

ZAN
(SKASH)
FASA
(RUSTLE)


GASA (RUSTLE)
GASA GASA
SURI (STROKE)
AND AFTER IT TOOK YEARS TO GROW IT THIS MUCH...
IF I DON'T FIX IT AND GIVE IT MANA QUICKLY, THE STAFF WILL DIE.
HAAAH...
SNAPPED RIGHT IN TWO...

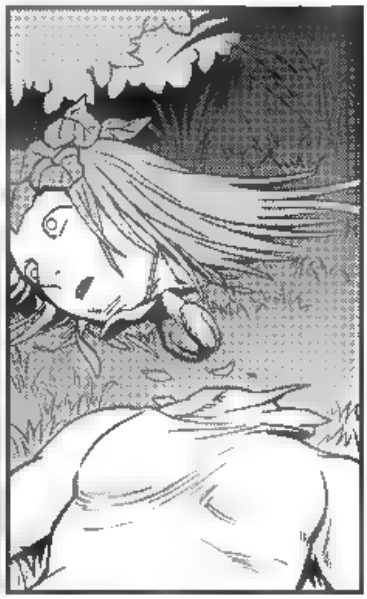


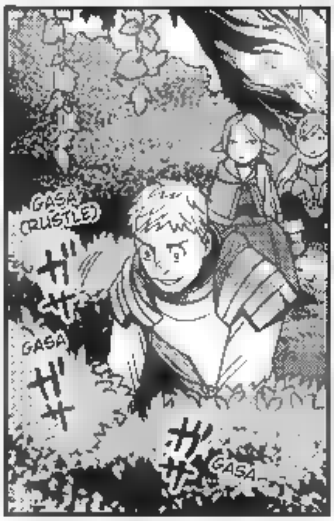
AAAAAH!
DOROO (OOZE)

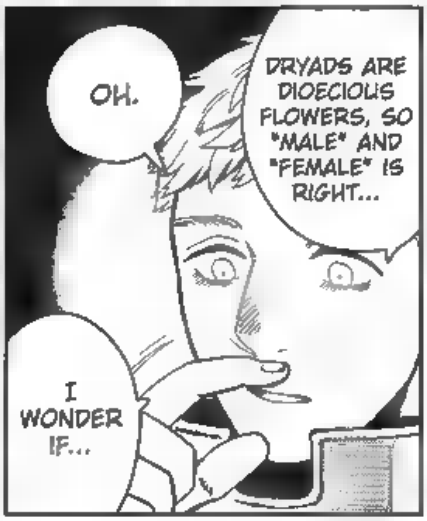
LIAR!!
BOTA BOTA
IT'S SAFE IN HERE...
BOTA (DRIP)

BURU BURU
IT...
BURU (SHAKE)
IT...

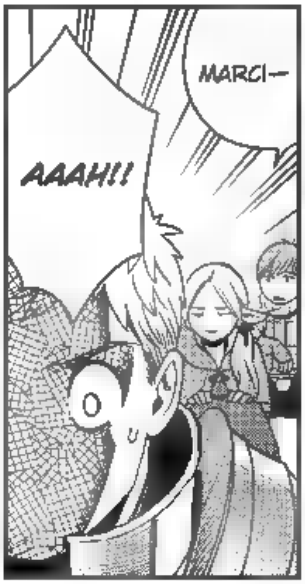
BASHA (SPLASH)
THAT MUST HAVE BEEN ROUGH.
YOU WERE FIGHTING DRYAD FLOWERS?

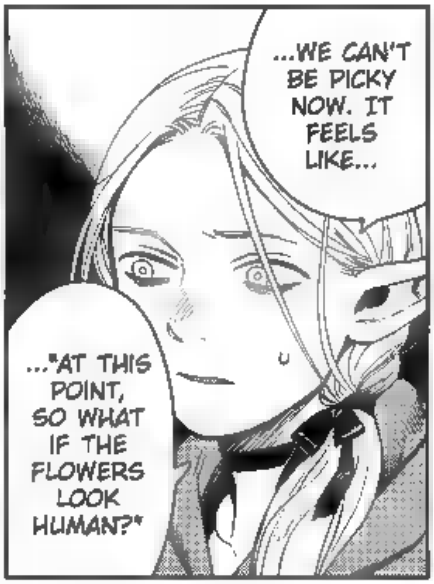



GASA (RUSTLE)
GASA
GASA


OH.
DRYADS ARE DIOECIOUS FLOWERS, SO "MALE" AND "FEMALE" IS RIGHT...
I WONDER IF...

STILL, FLOWER MON-STERS...
I WAS SURE THEY WERE REAL MEN AND WOMEN.


MARCI—
AAAH!!

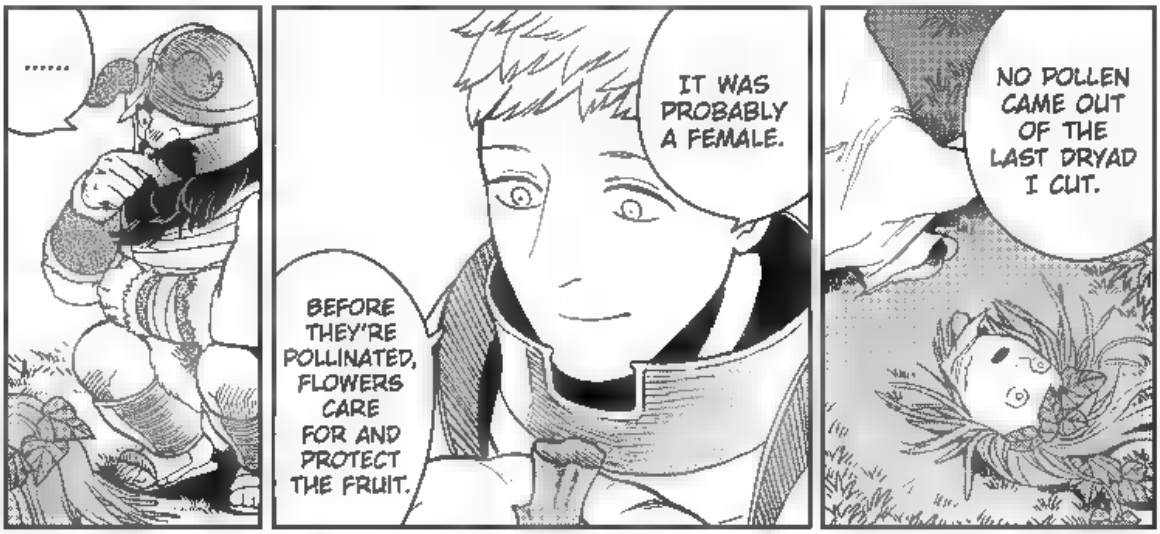

...WE CAN'T BE PICKY NOW. IT FEELS LIKE...
..."AT THIS POINT, SO WHAT IF THE FLOWERS LOOK HUMAN?"

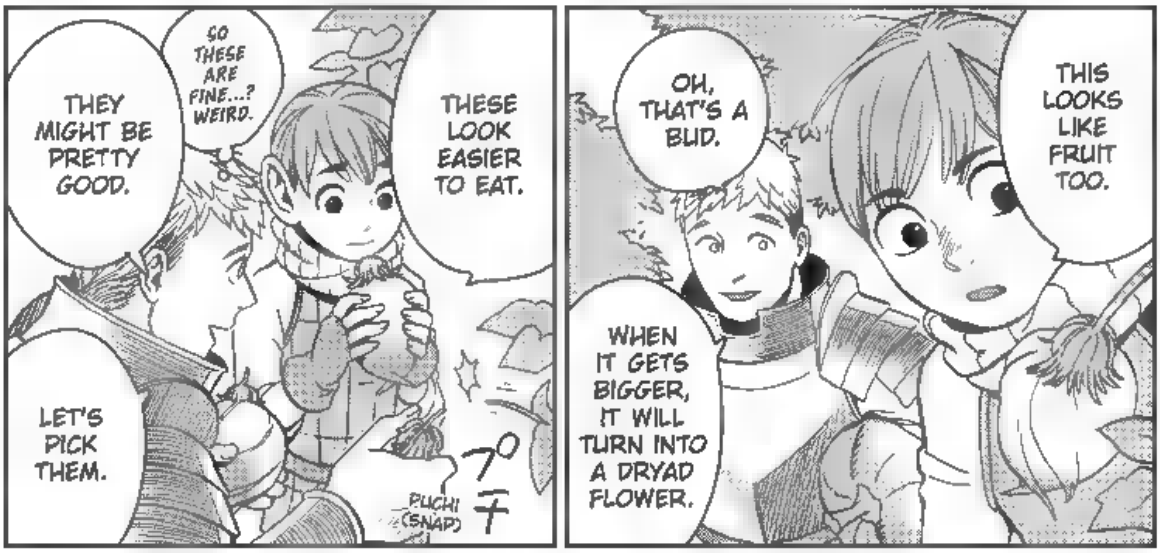
WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
SHOULDN'T WE HIT HIM AND MAKE HIM STOP?
HE'S LOOKING FOR SOMETHING...

I FOUND SOME!!

YOUR BLACK MAGIC JOKES AREN'T FUNNY!

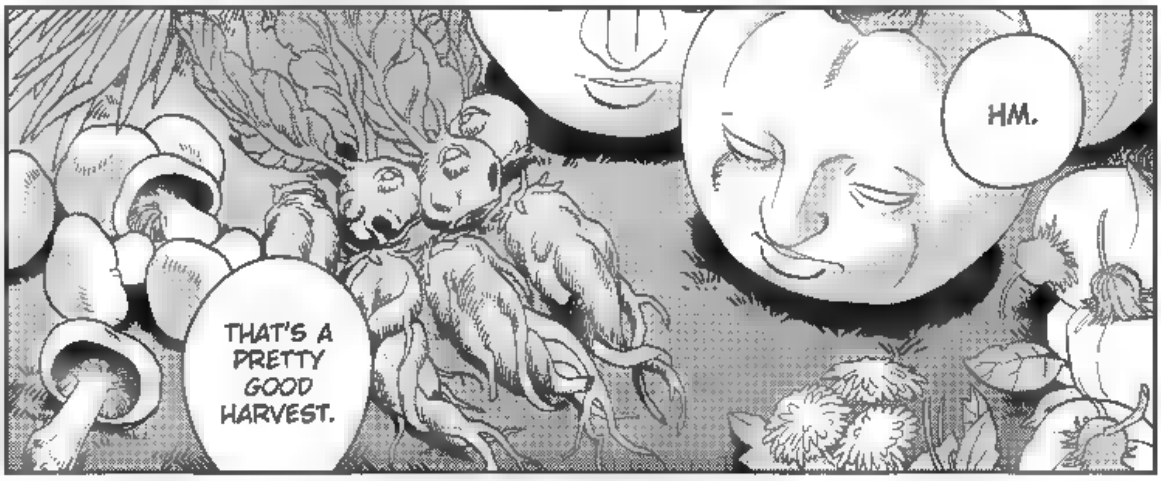
NO, QUIT IT!!
TURN BACK...
...TIME...
DON'T JUST START LOOKING FOR RISKY-SOUNDING SPELLS!
THAT CAN'T BE IN THERE!!


.....
BEFORE THEY'RE POLLINATED, FLOWERS CARE FOR AND PROTECT THE FRUIT.
IT WAS PROBABLY A FEMALE.
NO POLLEN CAME OUT OF THE LAST DRYAD I CUT.


THEY MIGHT BE PRETTY GOOD.
SO THESE ARE FINE...? WEIRD.
THESE LOOK EASIER TO EAT.
LET'S PICK THEM.
PUCHI (SNAP)
OH, THAT'S A BUD.
THIS LOOKS LIKE FRUIT TOO.
WHEN IT GETS BIGGER, IT WILL TURN INTO A DRYAD FLOWER.

...ALL RIGHT.
...DON'T TAKE TOO MANY.
SU (SHP)

ARE THESE EDIBLE?
LET ME SEE.
OH, SHUT UP.
JUST DROP IT, WOULD YOU!?
THERE'S NO TIME TO GET A DOG, SO I'LL JUST CUT OFF ITS HEAD, OKAY?
HEY.
MAN-DRAKES.


HM.
THAT'S A PRETTY GOOD HARVEST.

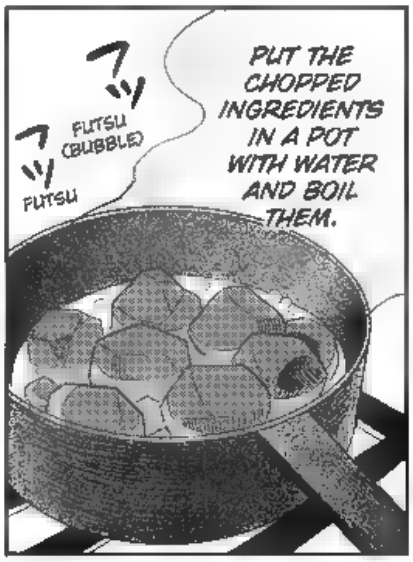
ドキ ドキ
DOKI (BADMP) DOKI
GOOD, VERY GOOD.

ばっ
BAKAN CHUUKO
かーん

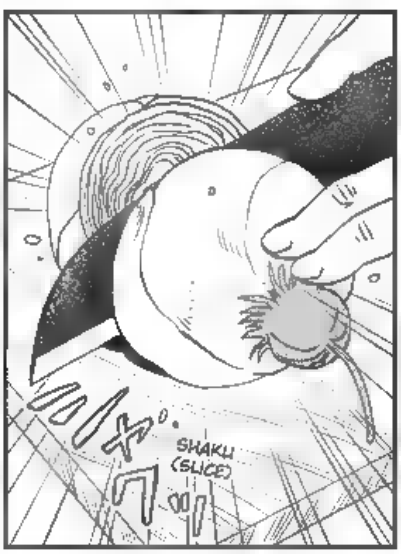
I ALMOST TOOK A SPEAR...
BORROWING AN AX FROM THE ORCS WAS A GOOD IDEA.
?

ONCE YOU HAVE A PASTE, ADD MORE WATER, THEN SEASON IT.

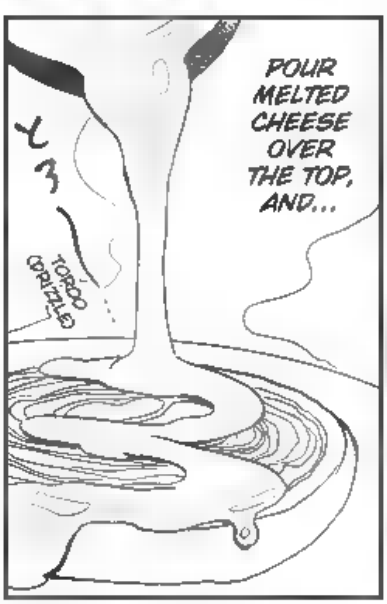
WHEN THEY'RE SOFT, TAKE THEM OFF THE HEAT...
...AND MASH THEM IN THE POT.


PUT THE CHOPPED INGREDIENTS IN A POT WITH WATER AND BOIL THEM.
FUTSU (BUBBLE)
FUTSU

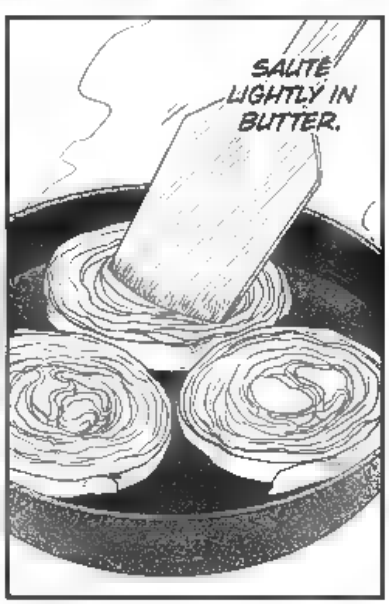
IN THAT CASE...
MM. IT SMELLS GOOD.


SHAKU (SLICE)

HMM...


POUR MELTED CHEESE OVER THE TOP, AND...
TORO (DRIZZLE)

ADD MUSHROOMS.


SAUTÉ LIGHTLY IN BUTTER.

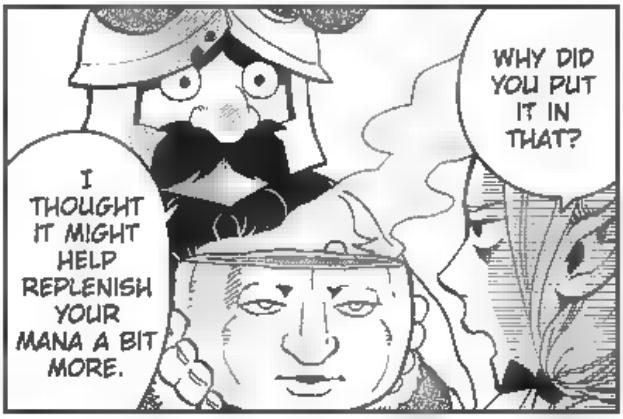
Jack-O'-Lantern Potage and Dryad Bud Sauté with Cheese Sauce

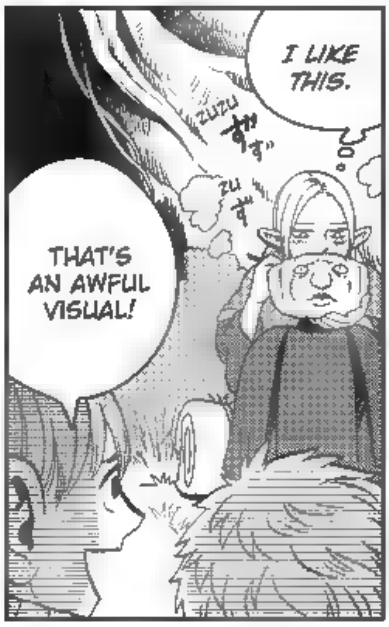
(Serves 4)

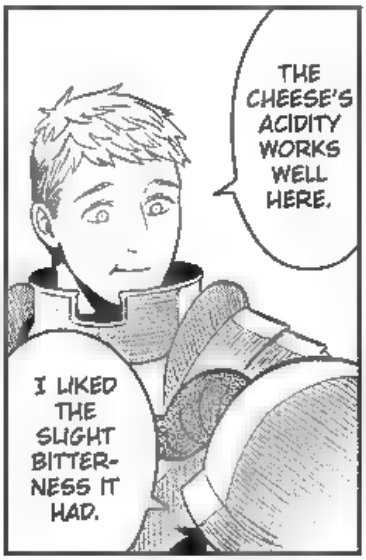
IT'S DONE!

ENERGY
VITAMINS
PROTEIN
CALCIUM
FAT
CARBS

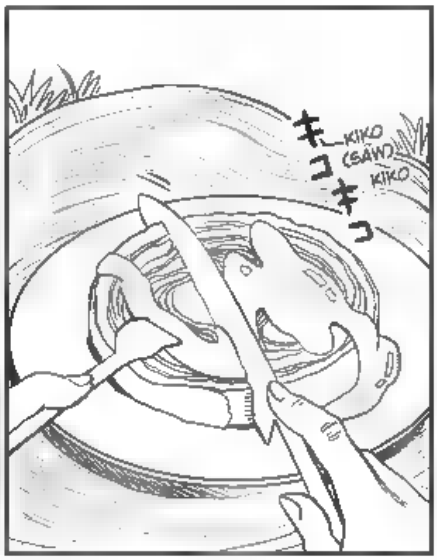
Ingredients
Dryad fruit——1
Mandrake (optional)——1
Dryad buds——2
Salt and pepper——To taste



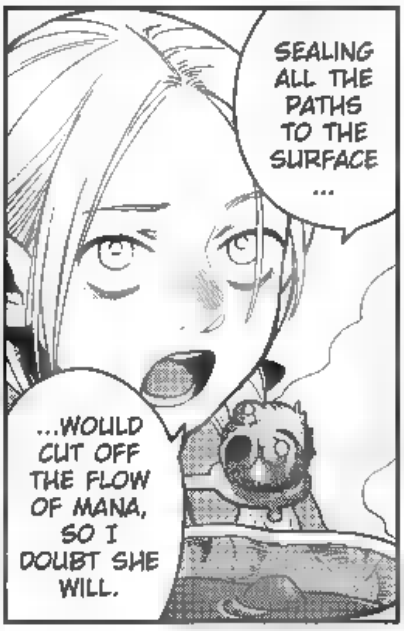



THE CHEESE'S ACIDITY WORKS WELL HERE.
I LIKED THE SLIGHT BITTERNESS IT HAD.

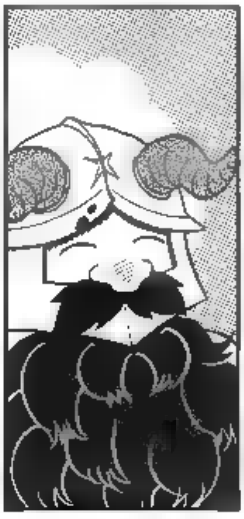
トローリ
TORORI (DRIBBLE)


キコキコ
KIKO (SAW)
KIKO

THERE MUST BE A WAY OUT SOMEWHERE.
パクリ (CHOMP)


SEALING ALL THE PATHS TO THE SURFACE ...
...WOULD CUT OFF THE FLOW OF MANA, SO I DOUBT SHE WILL.

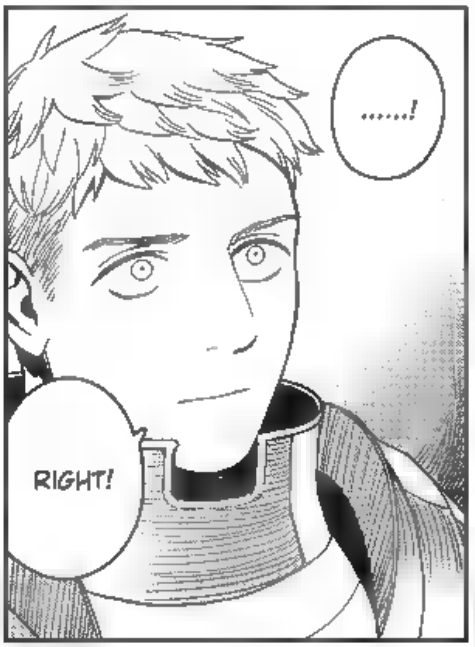
SO HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET OUT?
WHAT IF WE'RE STUCK IN HERE FOREVER?



I'M STARTING TO THINK THIS MIGHT WORK OUT.
THINGS LOOK BETTER ON A FULL STOMACH.

THAT'S IT!
IS THERE ANY LOGIC TO THE CHANGES IN THE DUNGEON?
LET'S JOT DOWN MAPS AND THE INTERVALS BETWEEN TREMORS.

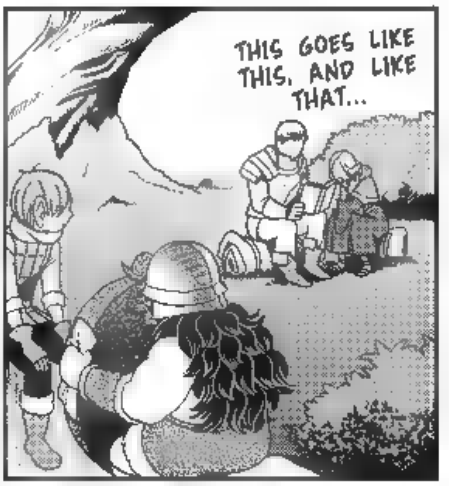
YOU SHOULDN'T PUSH YOURSELF YET...
I'M NOT GOING TO.
I THINK I MAY HAVE RECOVERED SOME MANA.
WE HAVE TO TREAT YOUR WOUNDS, LAIOS AND SENSHI.
PWAH!
AAAH...
I'M ALL WARM NOW.
I'LL TEACH YOU MAGIC.
PI (POINT)
LAIOS!
YOU HAVE TO STEP UP.
WELL, AT HEART, THEY'RE SIMILAR.
IT'S A BIT DIFFERENT FROM THE SYSTEM I USE, BUT...
SHE SPECIALIZES IN THE GNOME MAGIC SYSTEM.
IT'S FINE. I'LL DRUM IT INTO YOU SOON ENOUGH.
TECHNI-CALLY...
FALIN TAUGHT YOU THE BASICS, DIDN'T SHE?
I CAN'T PROTECT ALL OF YOU FROM THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN BY MYSELF.
IF YOU LEARN HEALING AND DEFENSE SPELLS, IT'LL BE MUCH EASIER.

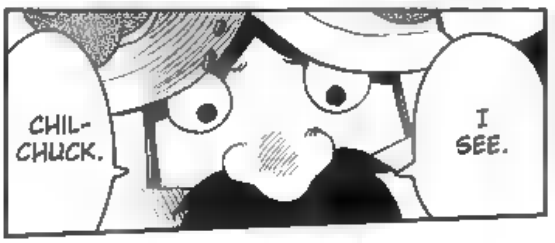

.....!
RIGHT!

WE HAVE TO GET STRONGER.

SATISFIED...
.....

THAT'S HOW YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE.
THEY'RE TOO OPTIMISTIC.


THIS GOES LIKE THIS, AND LIKE THAT...


CHIL-CHUCK.
I SEE.

YES. SO WHAT?
YOU SAID YOUR FATHER HAS PASSED, DIDN'T YOU?
I SEE...

AND WHY DID YOU COVER MY EYES WHEN THERE WERE MONSTERS AROUND!?
I CAN'T TAKE IT!
LOOK, WOULD YOU STOP TREATING ME LIKE A KID!?
I MEAN, IT ENDED UP SAVING ME, BUT...

...BUT YOU NEED TO HAVE PROPER KNOWLEDGE OF THEM.
AT YOUR AGE, I BET THESE THINGS ARE STARTING TO INTEREST YOU...
MEAN-ING...?
POKI (SNAP)

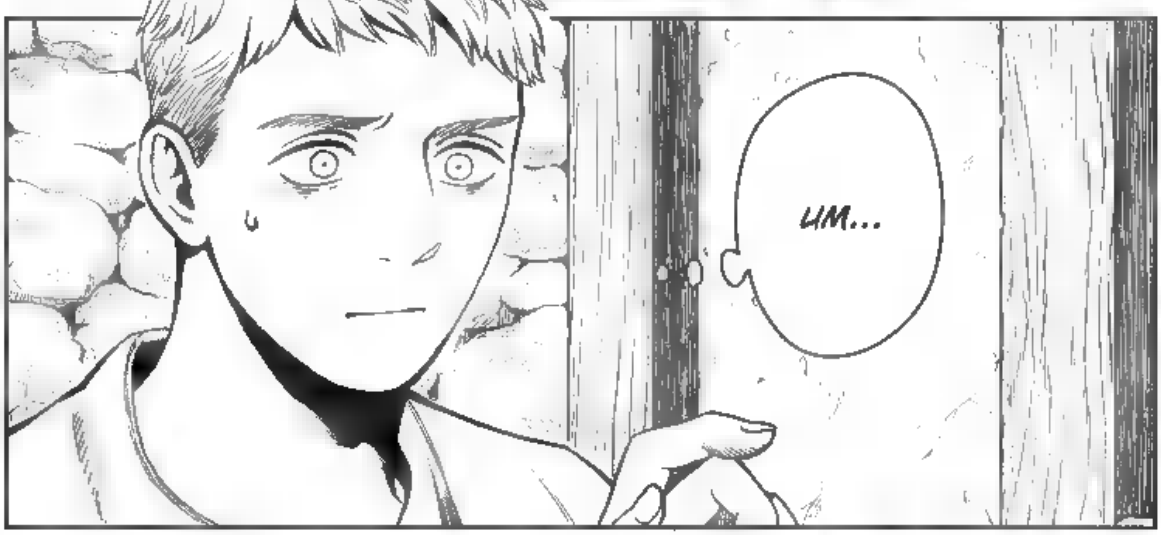
THIS IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY. I'LL TEACH YOU.
?
YOU SIT THERE.

RIGHT.
HUMANS ALSO HAVE STAMENS AND PISTILS...

...FAR INTO THE NIGHT.
AND SO IT WENT ...
LISTEN SERIOUSLY!!
W-R-O-N-G!!
CHAPTER 33: THE END

34. Cockatrice

GO ON. HURRY!


UM...

ギュ
GYUMU (SQUEEZE)

FUNI (SQUISH)
ふに…

ちょん
CHON (TAP)

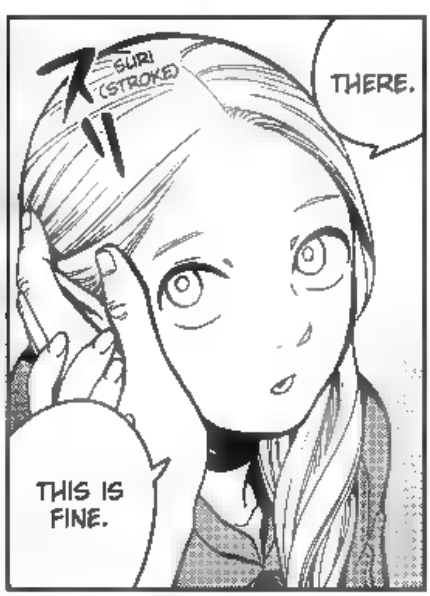
RUDE !!!
BASH!! (FLAP)
AGH!

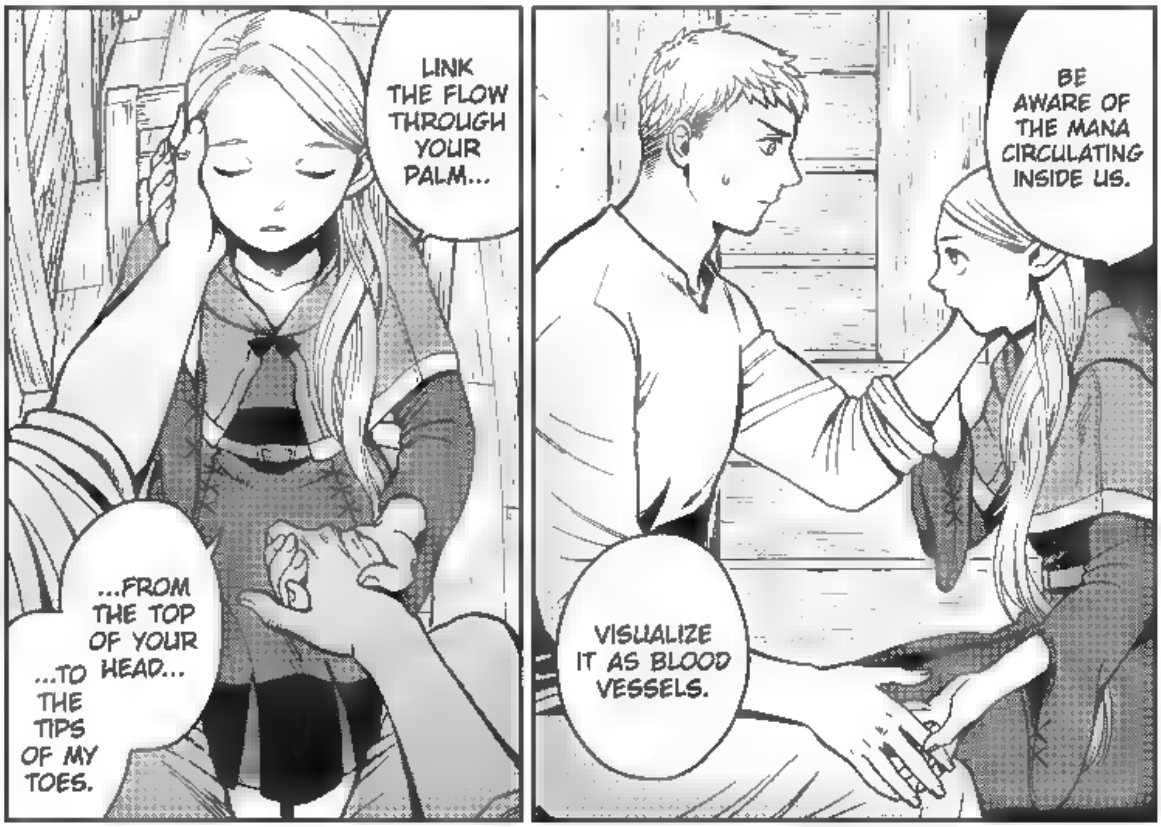
BACHI (SMACK)

THAT'S NOT THE POINT HERE!
PUT OUT YOUR LEFT HAND.
I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BAD TO TOUCH IT IN A WEIRD WAY...

COME ON, FOCUS! FOCUS!
GETTING EMBARRASSED WON'T IMPROVE YOUR MAGIC!
SHE'S STRICT ...

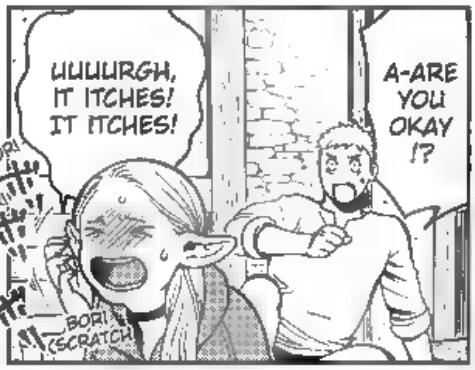
NH...


SURI (STROKE)
THERE.
THIS IS FINE.

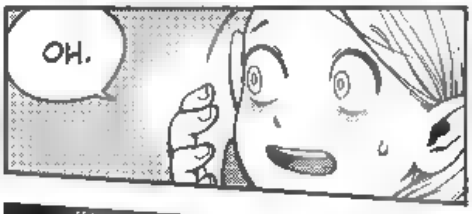

LINK THE FLOW THROUGH YOUR PALM...
...FROM THE TOP OF YOUR HEAD...
...TO THE TIPS OF MY TOES.
BE AWARE OF THE MANA CIRCULATING INSIDE US.
VISUALIZE IT AS BLOOD VESSELS.

WHEN YOU THINK YOU HAVE THE RHYTHM...
...CHANT AFTER ME.
SYNCHRONIZE OUR BREATHING...
...TEMPERATURE, AND PULSE RATE...

LILIA...
LILIA
LILIA
LILIA
LILIA
LILIA


UUUURGH, IT ITCHES! IT ITCHES!
A-ARE YOU OKAY !?
BORI BORI
BORI (SCRATCH)

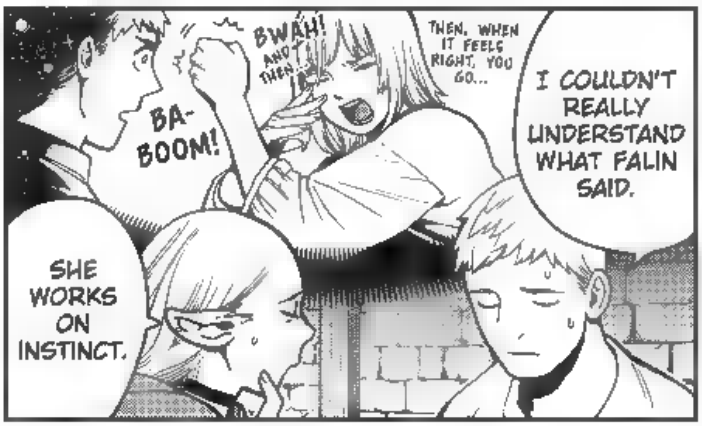
GATTAAAAN (CLATTER)
ITCHY!!!


OH.

ARE YOU SURE?
THAT'S AMAZING!
IT WORKED! YOU DID IT, LAIOS!
YOU'RE BLEEDING.

THE SCAB CAME OFF.
HUH!?

THANKS.
THE WAY YOU TAUGHT ME WAS NICE AND EASY TO UNDERSTAND.


BWAH! AND THEN...
THEN, WHEN IT FEELS RIGHT, YOU GO...
BA-BOOM!
I COULDN'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT FALIN SAID.
SHE WORKS ON INSTINCT.

YES, BECAUSE THE SCAB CAME OFF.
IT'S ALWAYS LIKE THIS AT FIRST.
YOU'RE A FAST LEARNER, THOUGH.
APTITUDE FOR THIS MUST RUN IN YOUR FAMILY!

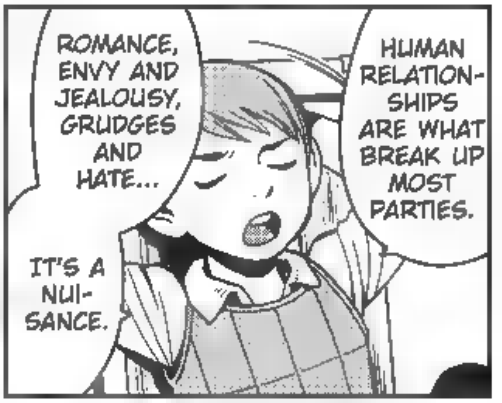
JUST DO WHAT YOU DID BEFORE.
DOKI DOKI
DOKI
DOKI (BADUMP)
I'LL BE WATCHING.
ALL RIGHT, BEFORE YOU FORGET HOW IT FEELS, TRY DOING IT TO SENSHI.
TSUU (WEAVE)
NOW THEN...
KU (TUG)
KU
IT'S A STOPGAP, BUT...
I WONDER IF THEY'LL ASSIMILATE...
...I'LL USE DRYAD TWIGS TO REPAIR IT.
I'M SORRY...
BAD TOUCH ...
I TOLD YOU, THAT'S NOT THE POINT!
SO (PAT)
UM...

...YOU REALLY CAN'T DISCOUNT THAT SORT OF STUFF.
HEALERS HAVE TO BE ■ CONTACT WITH OTHERS A LOT, AND IT CREATES PROBLEMS.

THIS IS AWKWARD...
COME ON, DON'T GET EMBARRASSED.
EMBARRASSMENT IS IMPROVEMENT'S BIGGEST ENEMY.

YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT FALIN AND SHURO, RIGHT?
IT'S JUST WHAT I'VE SEEN.

GRR.
HEY...

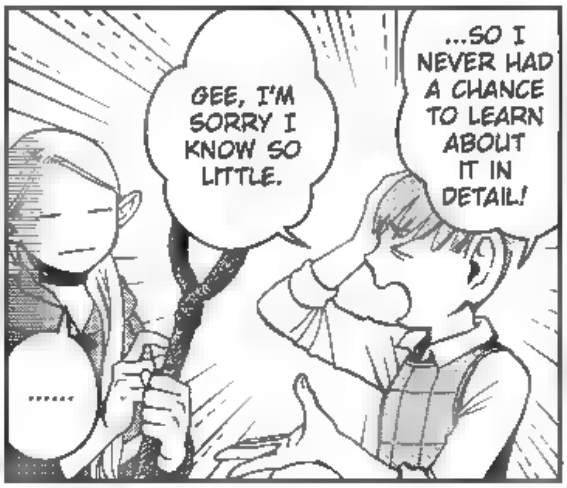

ROMANCE, ENVY AND JEALOUSY, GRUDGES AND HATE...
HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS ARE WHAT BREAK UP MOST PARTIES.
IT'S A NUISANCE.

LIKE, SAY, KNOWING WHERE OTHER PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO BE TOUCHED.
FRANKLY, MORE THAN MAGIC...
...I'D RATHER LAIOS LEARNED HOW TO SOCIALIZE AND SIZE PEOPLE UP.
IF HE HAD THAT...

MORE THAN COMBAT SKILLS, LEADERS NEED THE ABILITY TO BIND PEOPLE TOGETHER.

WHY DON'T YOU LEARN A BIT ABOUT MAGIC, CHILCHUCK?
AREN'T YOU JUST BLINDLY FEARFUL OF ITS REPUTATION?

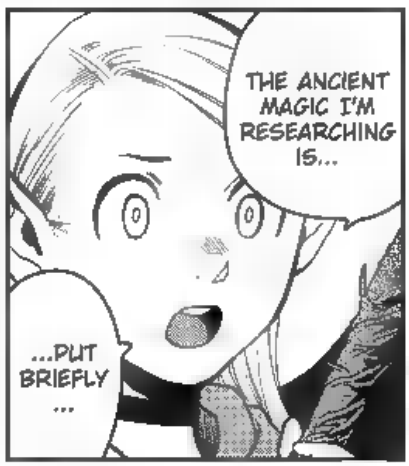
...HE WOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN ROPED INTO HELPING WITH BLACK MAGIC.

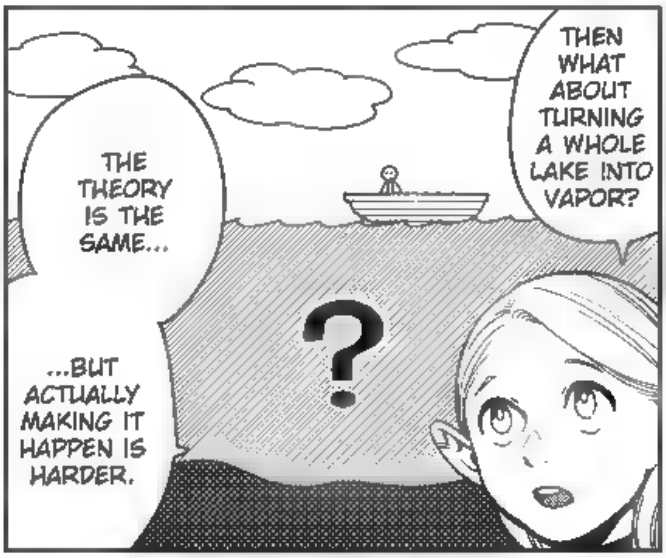

...SO I NEVER HAD A CHANCE TO LEARN ABOUT IT IN DETAIL!
GEE, I'M SORRY I KNOW SO LITTLE.
.....

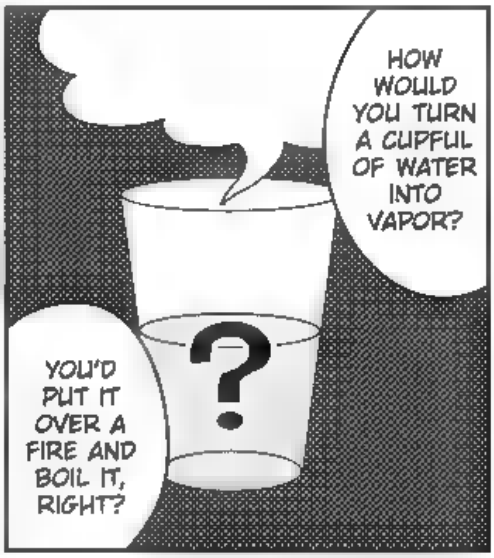
OH, WOW, I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT!
ANY TIME A HALF-FOOT'S GOTTEN INVOLVED WITH ANTYHING TIED TO BLACK MAGIC..
...THEY'VE BEEN SNATCHED BY ELVES AND NEVER SEEN AGAIN...

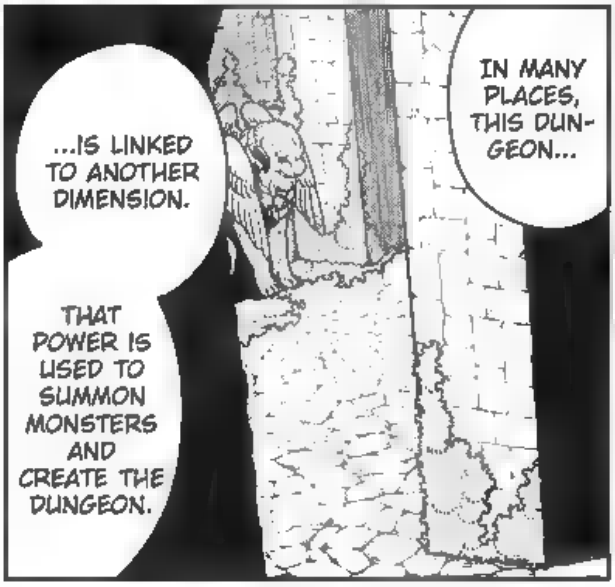
ANOTHER DIMENSION...

...MAGIC THAT DRAWS ENERGY...
...FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION WHERE "INFINITY" EXISTS.

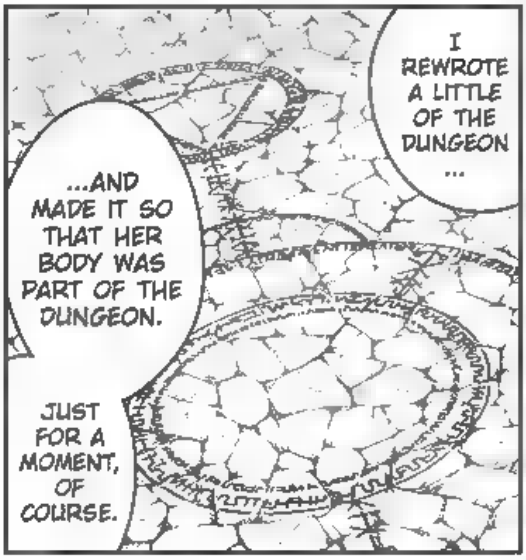

THE ANCIENT MAGIC I'M RESEARCHING IS...
...PUT BRIEFLY ...


THEN WHAT ABOUT TURNING A WHOLE LAKE INTO VAPOR?
THE THEORY IS THE SAME...
...BUT ACTUALLY MAKING IT HAPPEN IS HARDER.

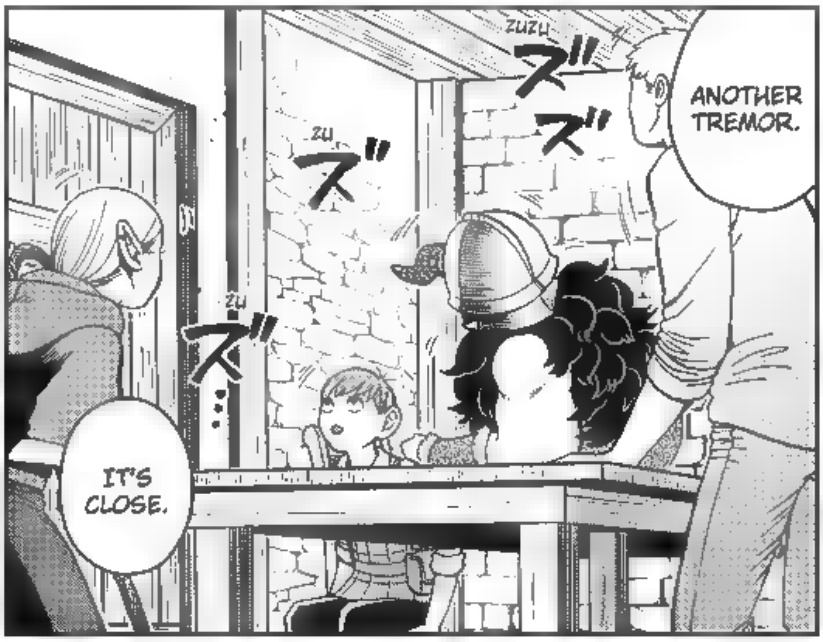

HOW WOULD YOU TURN A CUPFUL OF WATER INTO VAPOR?
YOU'D PUT IT OVER A FIRE AND BOIL IT, RIGHT?


IN MANY PLACES, THIS DUNGEON...
...IS LINKED TO ANOTHER DIMENSION.
THAT POWER IS USED TO SUMMON MONSTERS AND CREATE THE DUNGEON.

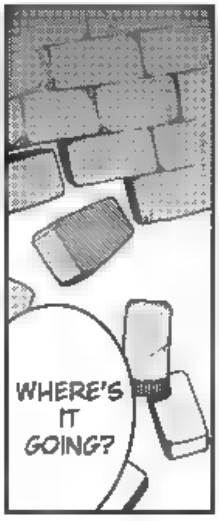
"COORDINATE MAGIC" SUPPORTS SPELLS THAT REQUIRE...
...VAST AMOUNTS OF POWER AND TIME.

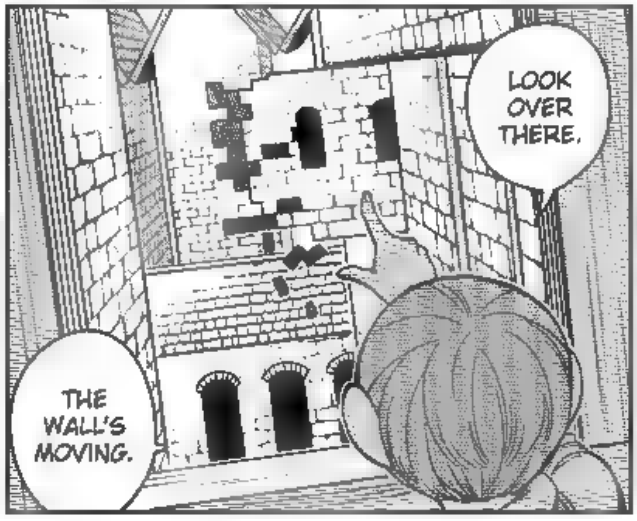

I REWROTE A LITTLE OF THE DUNGEON ...
...AND MADE IT SO THAT HER BODY WAS PART OF THE DUNGEON.
JUST FOR A MOMENT, OF COURSE.

BACK THEN, FALIN NO LONGER HAD THE STRENGTH TO RECOVER ON HER OWN.


ZUZU
ズズ
ZU
ズ
ZU
ズ
ANOTHER TREMOR.
IT'S CLOSE.

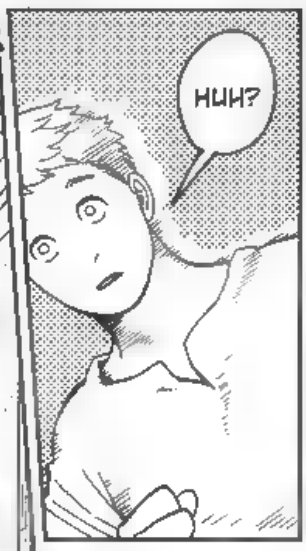
ZUN (RUMBLE)
ズン

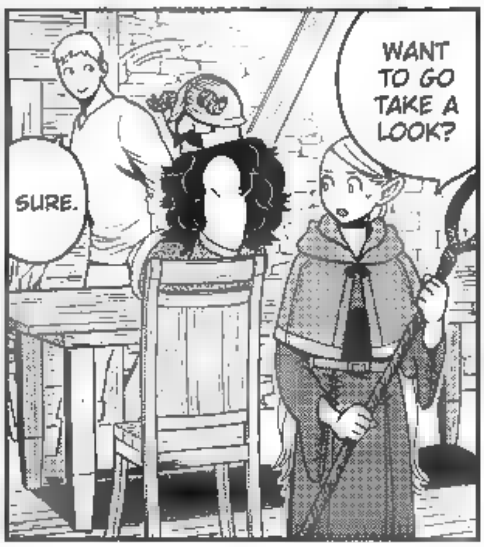

WHERE'S IT GOING?


LOOK OVER THERE.
THE WALL'S MOVING.

BA (LUNGE)

GATA! (CLONK)
ガタ
GATA
ガタ
GATAAAN (CLATTER)
ガタン!
TGON (WHUNK)

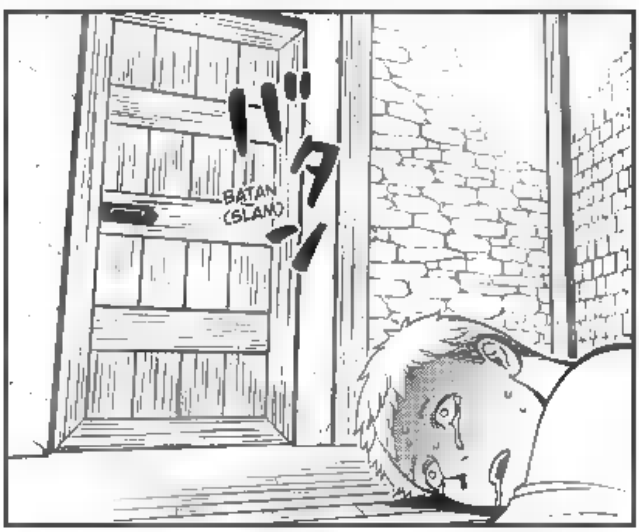

HUH?


WANT TO GO TAKE A LOOK?
SURE.

IT SHOULD SUBSIDE SOON, BUT...
.....
.....

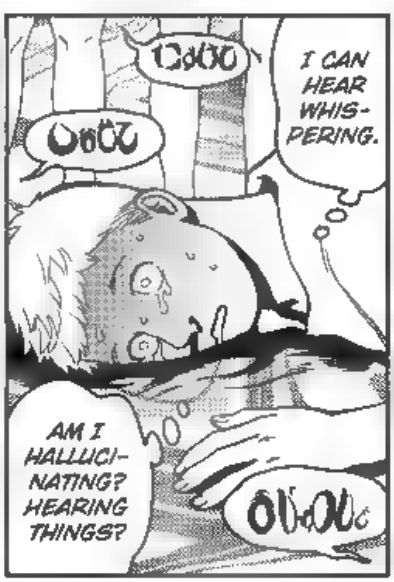
...OH.
I BET HE HAS MANA SICKNESS.
HE DID JUST USE MANA FOR THE FIRST TIME.

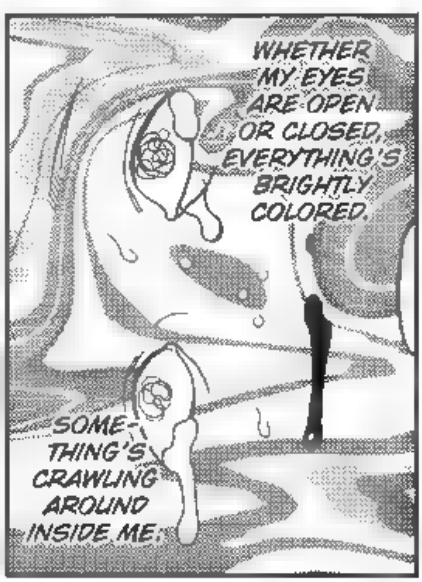
WH-WHAT'S WRONG !?
I GUH...
I GOT DIZZY ALL OF A...


BATAN (SLAM)

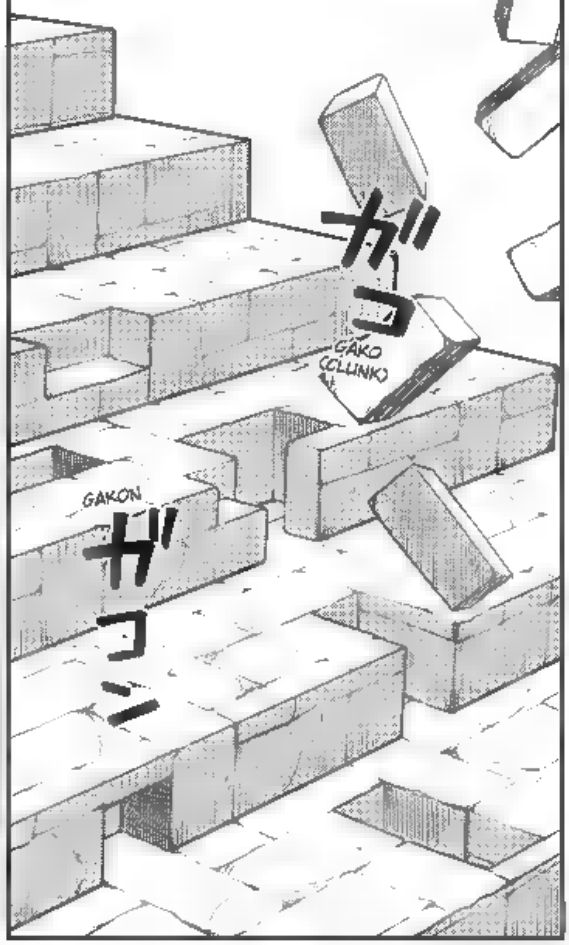
WE'RE LEAVING YOU HERE.
REST QUIETLY, OKAY?

MANA SICK-NESS...
... BITES.


I CAN HEAR WHIS-PERING.
AM I HALLUCI-NATING? HEARING THINGS?


WHETHER MY EYES ARE OPEN OR CLOSED, EVERYTHING'S BRIGHTLY COLORED.
SOME-THING'S CRAWLING AROUND INSIDE ME.

THE ROAD IS CHANGING OVER THERE.
HMM.


ガコ
GAKO (CLUNK)
GAKON
ガコン

ズ zu zu ズ
WE NEED TO OBSERVE A BIT MORE.
NOT BEING ABLE TO PROGRESS MUCH HURTS, BUT...

ズ zu (RUMBLE)
I THINK I SEE A PATTERN...
...OR MAYBE NOT...

zu ズ zu ズ zu ズ
HA! HA! HA!
THAT WAS CLOSE.
WE ALMOST GOT STUCK HERE.

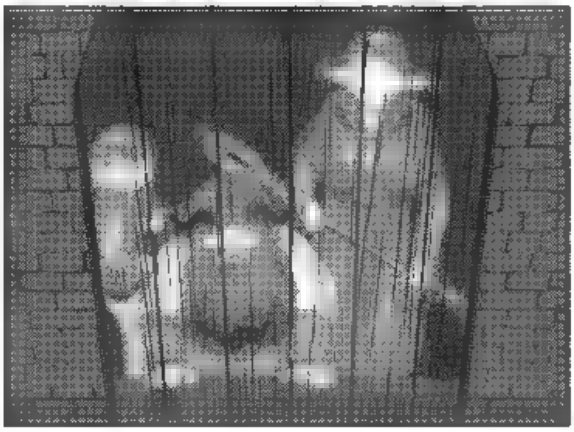
zu ズ zu ズ zu ズ
THE GROUND IS RISING!
GET DOWN! GET DOWN!

zu ズ zu ズ
HM?

ZUN
BOOM
ズ
ン

YAAAAGH!

(STOMP)



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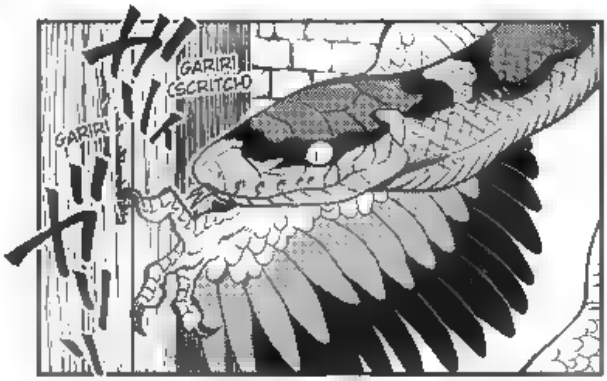

GARIRI (SCRITCH)
GARIRI

IF IT'S LIKE A BASI-LISK...
...IT'S PROBABLY SENSING OUR BODY HEAT.
LAIOS TRIVIA
THEY'RE CALLED PIT ORGANS!
MAKING A CLEAN, QUIET GETAWAY WILL BE TOUGH.

COULD WE ESCAPE OUT THE BACK?
WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
GATSU (SCRATCH)
GORI (SCRAPE)
THIS WON'T HOLD FOR LONG.

.....
.....
LISTEN, YOU...

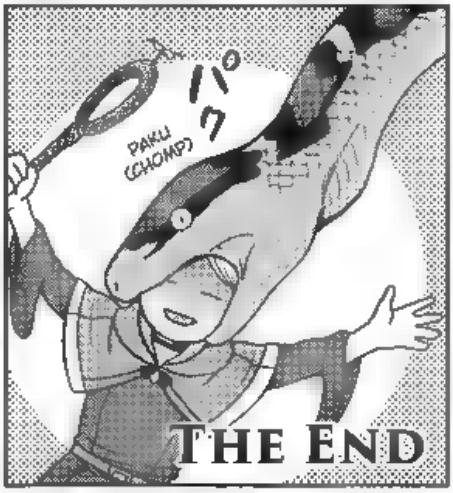
MAR-CILLE.
YOU REMEMBER HOW WE BEAT THE BASILISK, RIGHT?

...STILL, THAT'S THE SNAKE HEAD'S ABILITY.
GARI
THE BIRD HEAD WILL BE RELYING ON SIGHT.
(STARE)

NO MATTER WHAT, DON'T FLINCH!
THROW YOUR BODY AND SOUL INTO INTIMIDATING YOUR OPPONENT.
THAT'S EASY FOR YOU TO SAY.
UUU...
KOSO
YELL AS LOUDLY AS YOU CAN.
I'M BAD AT YELLING.
MAKE YOURSELF LOOK BIG.
YES, I AM THE TALLEST ONE OF US...
...BUT THE ENEMY'S TWICE AS BIG AS LAST TIME.
KOSO (SNEAK)
KOSO
IT'S "BRAWK"!!
"BRAWK"!!
WELL, WHAT-EVER.
I JUST NEED TO MAKE THE ENEMY RECOIL!
HUH!?
WHAT WAS THE YELL? "WAAH"?
OR WAS IT "GRAR"?
GARI (SCRATCH)
GARI
COULD I HIT IT WITH AN EXPLOSIVE SPELL?
FROM HERE, THE ANGLE'S NOT...

ちらっ
CHIRA (GLANCE)

だだだだ
DA DA
DA (TAP)
WAAAAAGH!!


パク
PAKU (CHOMP)
THE END

I CAN'T DO WHAT LAIOS DID.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

SHEER ENTHUSIASM WON'T BE ENOUGH HERE!!!
AGH! THIS WON'T WORK!
I'M ABSOLUTELY GOING TO MESS IT UP!

TO (TAP)

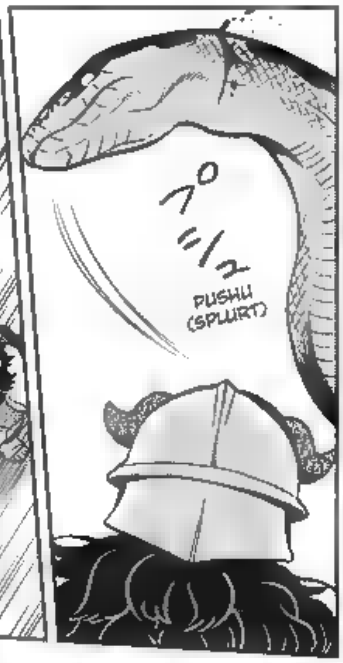
I'LL DO IT MY WAY!

I'LL...
ギュ
GYU (SQUEEZE)

だん!
DAN (STOMP)
ばん!
BAN (BAM)
どぉぉん
DOOOON (BOOOM)
THE MOST TALENTED GIRL IN THE HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL—
MARCILLE

AAAR
WHAT WAS THAT EXPLO-SION?
!?
IT'S MAR-CILLE! WE'RE GOING IN!

RGHI
TOO SHAL-LOW!


PUSHU (SPLURT)

GARI (SLASH)

CHANT!
I WON'T MAKE IT—

OH NO... I STOOD OUT TOO MUCH.
BOTH HEADS ARE FOCUSED ON ME!?

HUH!?
HUH?

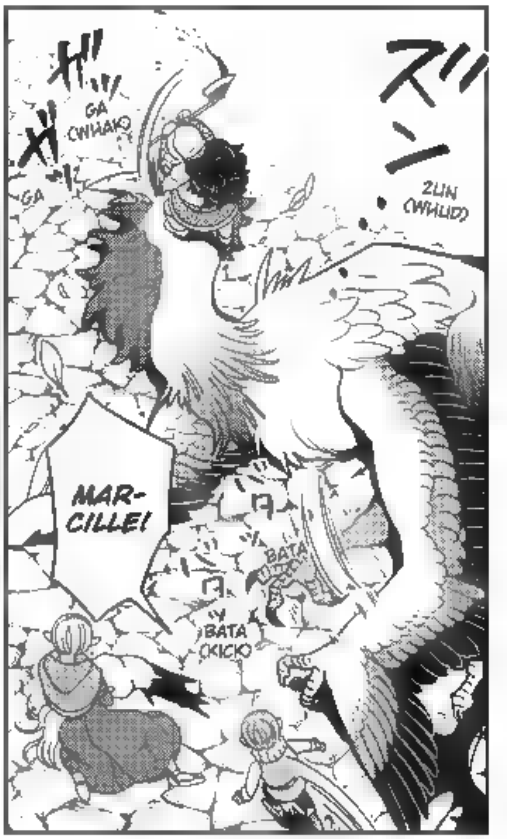
SWA (SHWIP)

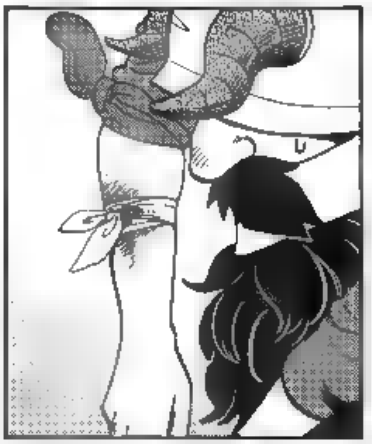
DOKURI (BADUMP)
GHK...
BO (BWOOMF)

GO GRIMNIR
GURAA
(TOTTER)

I'M... FINE...
YOU GOT BIT!?

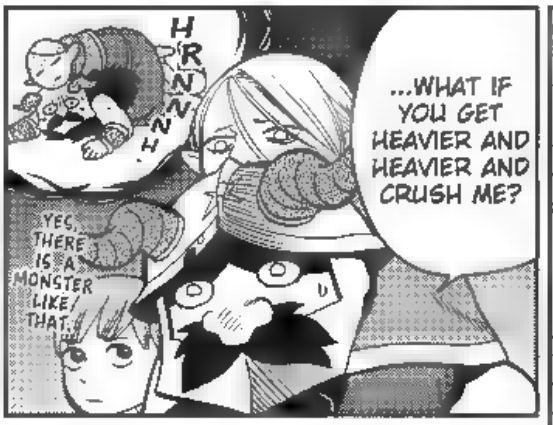
ZUPU (SHLLINK)


GA (WHAK)
GA
ZUN (WHUD)
MAR-CILLE!
BATA
BATA (KICK)



SORRY.
HERE. CLIMB ON.
LET'S GET BACK TO LAIOS.

FOR THE LOVE OF...
YOU DID GET BIT! YOU MORON!


H R N N N H
YES, THERE IS A MONSTER LIKE THAT.
...WHAT IF YOU GET HEAVIER AND HEAVIER AND CRUSH ME?

NO, YOU'RE LIGHT.
BUT...
I'M SORRY... I'M HEAVY, AREN'T I? ARE YOU OKAY?

THAT'S AWFUL!
HUH!? A COCKATRICE BIT YOU!?

OH.
WELCOME BACK...

THERE'S A WAY?
DO YOU KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH COCKATRICE BITES?
I'LL TEACH YOU RIGHT NOW!

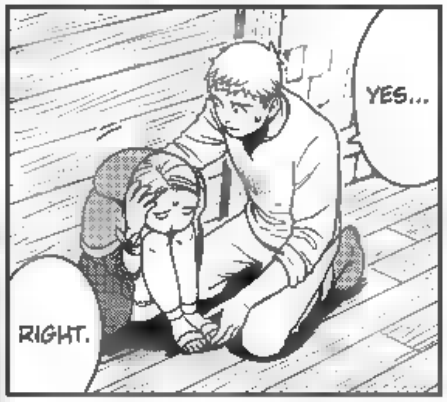
PULL IN YOUR ARMS. COVER YOUR EARS.
CLOSE YOUR MOUTH.

HFF...
SIT ON THE FLOOR, PUTTING AS MUCH SKIN AGAINST SKIN AS POSSIBLE.
HFF...

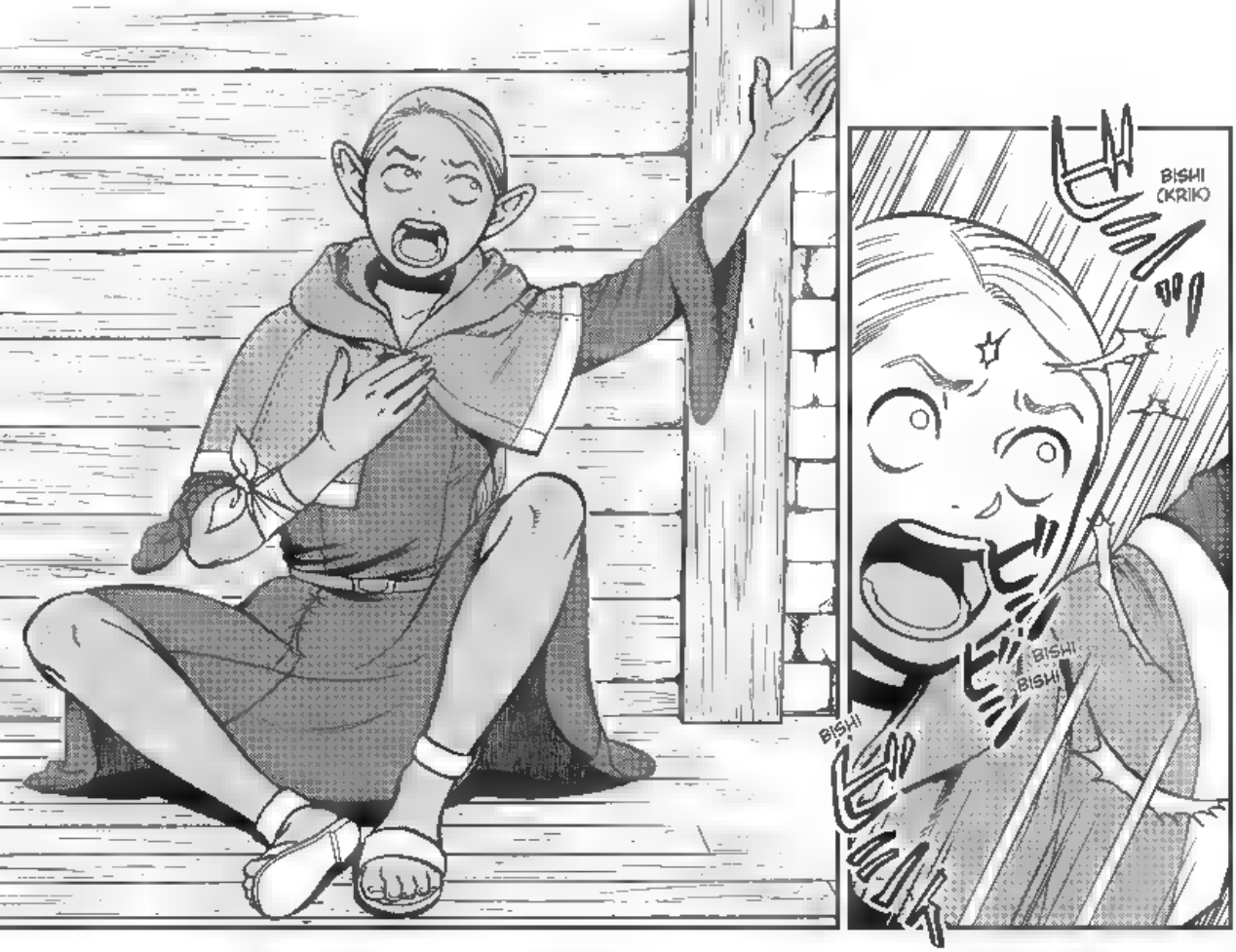
HAH!
HAH!

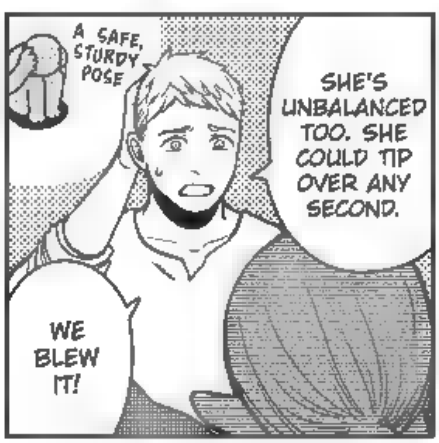
FIRST, TAKE OFF YOUR TROUSERS.
YOUR UNDERWEAR CAN STAY ON.

IT'S NOT A WAY TO AVOID PETRIFYING!?
NOW YOU CAN PETRIFY ANYTIME.
BALLING UP AS TIGHT AS YOU CAN MAKES YOU MORE DURABLE.


YES...
RIGHT.

GOOD...


BISHI (KRIK)
BISHI BISHI
BISHI

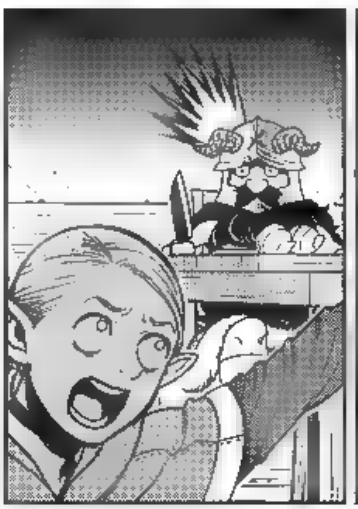

A SAFE, STURDY POSE
SHE'S UNBALANCED TOO. SHE COULD TIP OVER ANY SECOND.
WE BLEW IT!

MIGHT BREAK
MIGHT BREAK
AH! AWWW...
HARDENED IN A REALLY UNSAFE POSE!!
MIGHT BREAK

UMM...
NOBODY WOULD WANT TO END UP LIKE THAT.
WAYS TO UNDO PETRIFICATION?
THERE ARE A FEW.

SO WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT THIS?

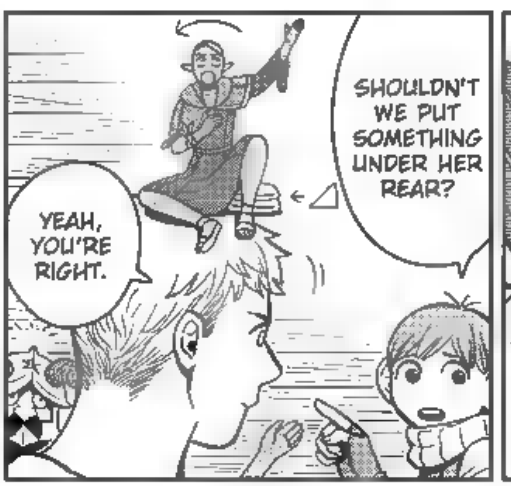
THE SECOND IS DEPETRIFICATION HERBS.
THAT, OR FIND OTHER ADVENTURERS WHO HAVE A CURE.
FIRST OPTION, JUST WAIT FOR IT TO HEAL.
PETRIFICATION IS MORE LIKE A CURSE THAN A VENOM.
ELVES HAVE STRONG RESISTANCE TO MAGIC, SO THEY SHOULD RECOVER FASTER THAN OTHER RACES.
FINALLY...
YOU!?
MARCILLE TAUGHT ME THE BARE BASICS OF HOW TO READ A GRIMOIRE.
THERE SHOULD BE A DEPETRIFICATION SPELL IN HERE.
...I'LL DO MY BEST TO CHANT THE TREATMENT SPELL.
FOR A TALL-MAN, ANYWHERE FROM SIX MONTHS TO TEN YEARS.
HOW LONG WOULD NATURAL HEALING TAKE?
.....
.....
I'LL GO HARVEST THAT COCKATRICE.
WELL, LET'S LOOK FOR HERBS AND ADVENTURERS...
...AND STAY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE OTHER TWO IDEAS.
HRNNN...



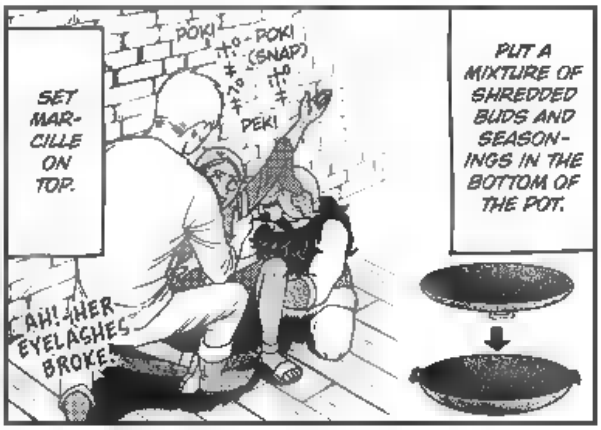
ZAKU
ZAKU (CHOP)
I NEED TO USE THEM UP FAST.
MAYBE I'LL PICKLE 'EM.

THEY DIS-COLORED A LOT IN JUST ONE NIGHT.
THEY MUST SPOIL QUICKLY.

I HAVE A GOOD IDEA!


SHOULDN'T WE PUT SOMETHING UNDER HER REAR?
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.

SHE'S TILTED. THAT DOESN'T LOOK SAFE.
THE TREMORS WILL KNOCK HER OVER.



DAY THREE

IT SHOULD PROBABLY BE REFINED OR COMPOUNDED, BUT...

HOW DO YOU USE IT?

...WANT TO TRY STICKING IT ON HER?

FOUND ONE...!!

OR DOES IT JUST LOOK LIKE ONE?

...AND TRIED ALL SORTS OF THINGS.

DAY TWO

AFTER THAT, LAIOS AND THE OTHERS WORKED VERY HARD...

DAY ONE

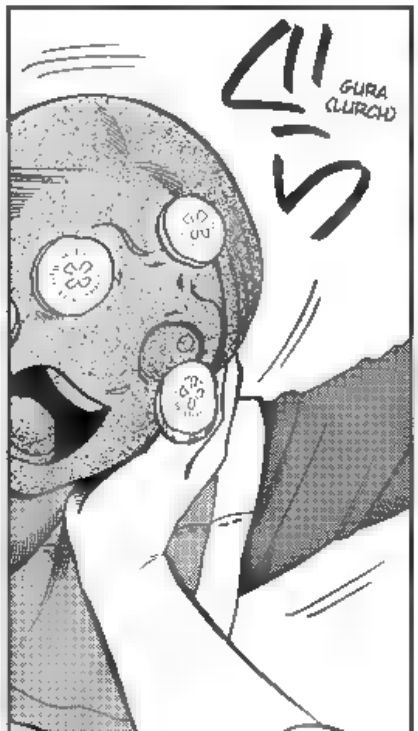
DAY FOUR

ULUNE
ULUNE
ΠΔΙΙΞ...

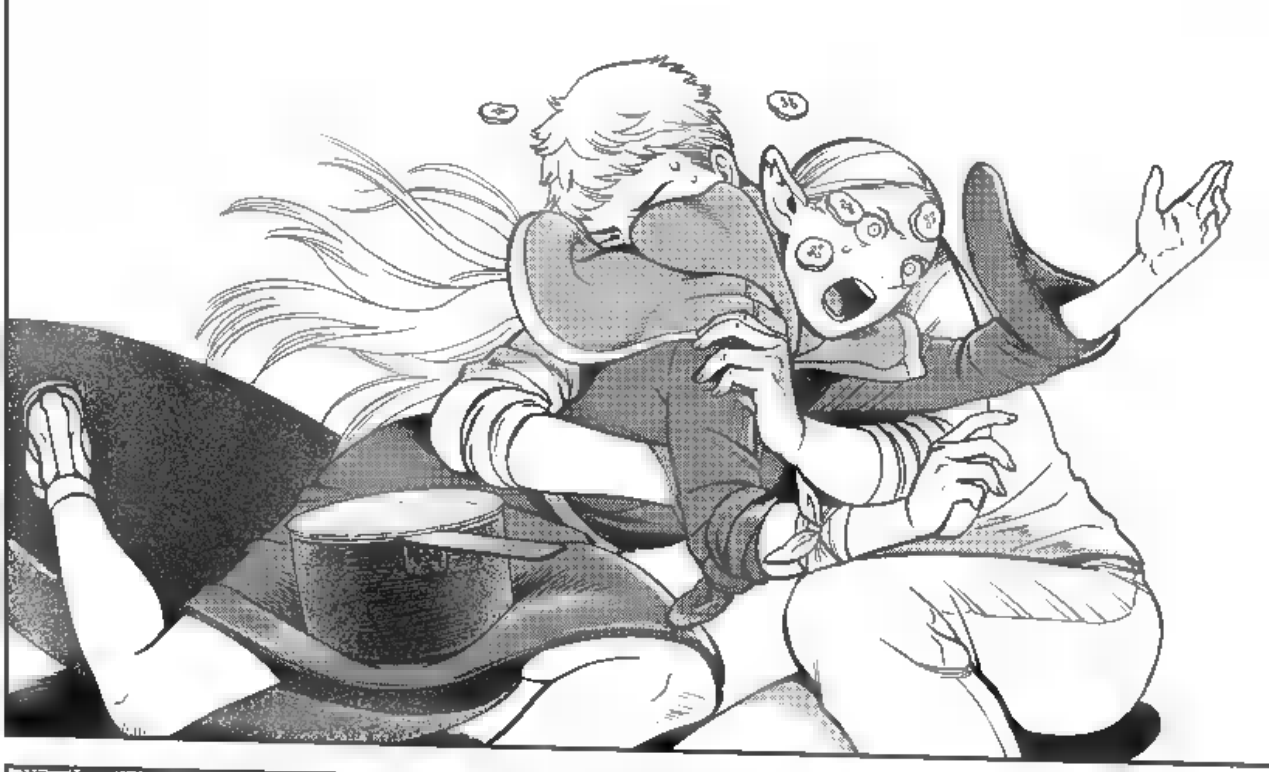
AM I PRONOUNCING THIS RIGHT?
ΠΡΙΡΔL

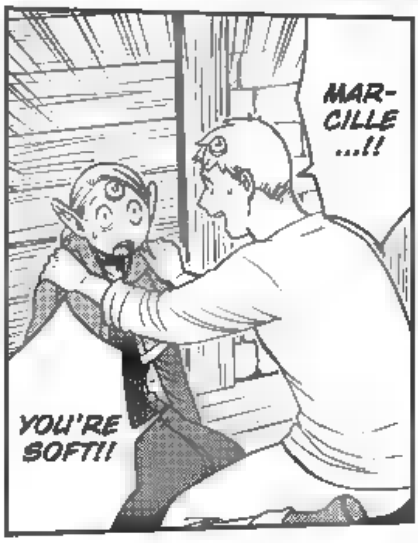
MY BODY HEAT HAS THE STONE WARMED UP.
NOW FOR THE CHANT...

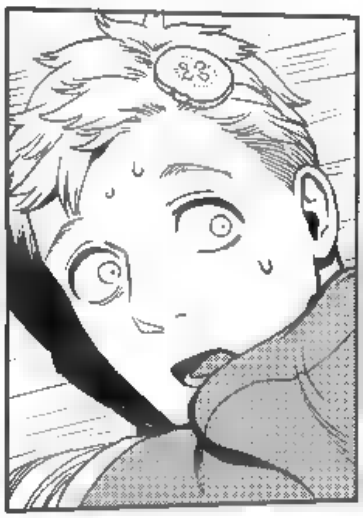
ギョッ
GYO (SHOCK)
!?
LOOK OU...


ぐらぐら
GURA (LURCH)

CHIRA (PEEK)
ちら
ΠΞΠ--




MAR-CILLE ...!!
YOU'RE SOFT!!



...HUH?

WHY THE VEGE-TABLE SLICES !?
WHY THE POTS!?

SUCCESS!
YAAAY!
HUH? HUH?
WHAT!? WHAT'S GOING ON!?

Eisbein-Style Cockatrice with Sauerkraut-Style Dryad Buds

(Serves 4)

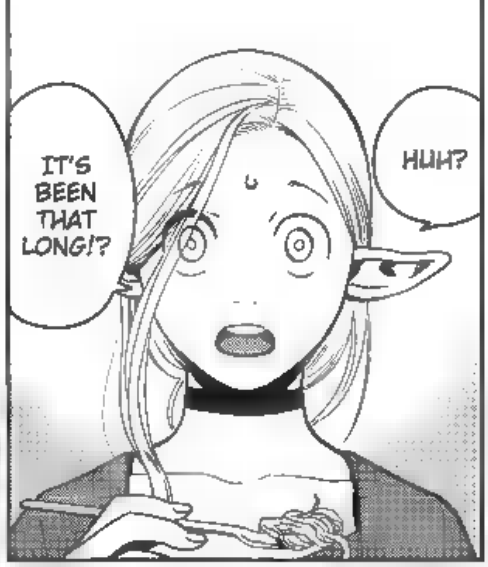
Garnished with Grilled Depetrification Herbs

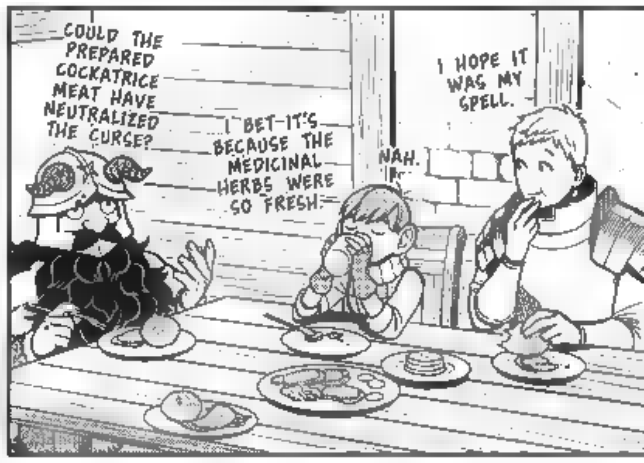
IT'S DONE!!

ENERGY
PROTEIN
VITAMINS
CALCIUM
CARBS
FAT

Ingredients

Cockatrice shank	1 kg
Dryad buds	As much as you like
Depetrification herb (not inspected)	1
Seasonings	To taste
Pickling weight (Marcille)	1





CHAPTER 34: THE END

SINCE A SINGLE BITE KILLS A HUMAN INSTANTLY, THERE'S NO ANTIDOTE...
THEIR POISON CAN KNOCK OUT A WHALE.
THE OCEAN'S SILENT ASSASSINS.
SEA SERPENTS
MISC. MONSTER TALES 5

WHAT HAPPENED, KURO!? YOUR FACE LOOKS FUNNY !!
A H!

KUROOO, I'M TIRED. CARRY M—
THAT WAS A CLOSE ONE.
I'M GLAD NOBODY GOT BITTEN.

KOBOLDS HAVE GOOD POISON RESISTANCE.
IF THE POISON WERE WORKING, KURO WOULD BE DEAD ALREADY.
WHAT DO WE DO!? IS KURO GONNA DIE!?
HEY, YOU CLEARLY GOT BITTEN!!
SOMETHING PRICKED ME.

THE SWELLING LASTED FOR A WEEK.
UH-HUH.
IF OUR NINJA DOGS COULD TALK, LIFE WOULD BE SO MUCH EASIER.

SNRK!
LOOK WHAT HAPPENED TO KURO'S FACE!!
WHY YOU LAUGHING!?
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO K-KEEP EYE ON IT.
TH-THERE'S NO ANTIDOTE ANYWAY.

PERFECT. I'LL USE THIS FLOWER TO EXPLAIN.
...KISSES OR CABBAGE PATCHES.
LISTEN. BABIES DON'T COME FROM...
I KNOW THAT!!
DRYADS
THE SPERM SENT DOWN THE POLLEN TUBE DOWN THE FEMALE'S STYLE FUSES WITH THE EGG CELLS ■ THE OVARY.
THIS IS FERTIL-IZATION.
STIGMA
POLLEN
POLLEN TUBE
SPERM CELL
EGG CELL
OVARY
...IT PRODUCES A POLLEN TUBE, AND THE POLLEN REACHES THE OVARY.
I SAID, I KN—
STA-MENS...
...OR "MALES," HAVE POLLEN.
WHEN THIS POLLEN REACHES THE STIGMA, A PART OF THE PISTIL, OR "FEMALE"...
NOW WE COME TO THE MAIN TOPIC.
WITH MAMMALS—
THE SEED GROWS UNTIL IT TAKES THE SAME FORM AS ITS PARENTS.
...AND SO LIFE IS HANDED DOWN.
THE FERTILIZED EGG CELL DIVIDES AGAIN AND AGAIN, AND THE OVARY BECOMES A SEED.
THIS IS THE FRUIT.
LIFE ...
YOU RUINED IT!!
A-A-A-AH!
I WAS EXPLAINING ONE STEP AT A TIME!
DRYADS POLLINATE BY KISSING.

I'M... NOT SURE.
THE CUT AND PREPARATION WERE DIFFERENT, SO I REALLY DON'T KNOW.
OH...
HM?
YOU KNOW. COMPARED WITH BASILISK.
WELL? HOW IS IT?
COCKATRICE
IT SAID THAT COCKATRICE TASTES LIKE STONE...
THE THING IS, IN MY FAVORITE BOOK, THE DUNGEON GOURMET GUIDE...
...THERE WAS A SECTION COMPARING THE TASTE OF BASILISK AND COCKATRICE.
HADN'T YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO COMPARE THEM?
.....
.....
...WHAT GIVES?
THAT'S...
THEN HE DIDN'T EAT IT.
IT SAID THAT KRAKEN TASTES GOOD ROASTED.
LATELY, THOUGH...
...I'VE STARTED TO THINK THE AUTHOR MAY NOT HAVE ACTUALLY EATEN ANY OF THOSE THINGS.
I'VE READ THAT BOOK SO MANY TIMES.
IT DIDN'T TASTE LIKE THAT TO ME.
YEAH ...
LIKE STONE?
...A LITTLE SALTIER THAN BASILISK.
I THINK MAYBE IT'S JUST...
READ ME MORE...
KOFF, KOFF!
HYEH HEH!
OH NO...
COPYING
WOW...
NO!
I WANNA READ IT!
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!
HAAAH...
I SEE...

APPROPRIATELY DISTRIBUTING THE TYPES [redacted] SUITED TO ANY PARTICULAR ENVIRONMENT IS ONE WAY TO SHOW YOUR DUNGEONIUM SKILLS!
THEY'RE BROADLY CALLED "CLEANERS"...
...BUT THEY EACH HAVE DIFFERENT PREFERENCES AND ACTIVE CONDITIONS.
DUNGEON CLEANERS
BARRIER EXPENSES
...FIRST YOU'D NEED TO ACQUIRE LAND THAT'S SUITABLE FOR A DUNGEON, AND THEN...
LIGHTING
TEMPERATURE REGULATION DEVICES
CONSTRUCTION EXPENSES
AIR FILTRATION SYSTEM
THE TOTAL COST WOULD RUN YOU SEVERAL MILLION GOLD.
FEES FOR SUMMONING SPIRITS AND MONSTERS
I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE'S ABLE TO STABLY SUPPLY A SPACE THIS VAST.
THAT BEING THE CASE... THE AWESOME POWER OF THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN [redacted] TERRIFYING.
BURU (SHIVER)
IT'S THAT BAD?
TAKE A ROOM THIS SIZE, EVEN IF YOU WERE ONLY PLANNING TO FILL IT WITH SLIMES...
BA (FWD)
JUST THINK ABOUT IT!
THAT'S A PRETTY LOWBROW POWER.
I'M SO JEALOUS!
...IS FILTHY RICH!!
YES.
IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, THE LUNATIC MAGICIAN...

5

DELICIOUS IN DUNGEON

RYOKO KUI

Translation: Taylor Engel **Lettering: Abigail Blackman**

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents [redacted] the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

DUNGEON MESHI Volume 5 ©Ryoko Kui 2017
First published in Japan in 2017 by KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo.
English translation rights arranged with KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo
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Yen Press
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10104

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First Yen Press Edition: May 2018

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2017932141

ISBNs: 978-1-9753-2644-9 (paperback)
978-1-9753-2685-2 (ebook)

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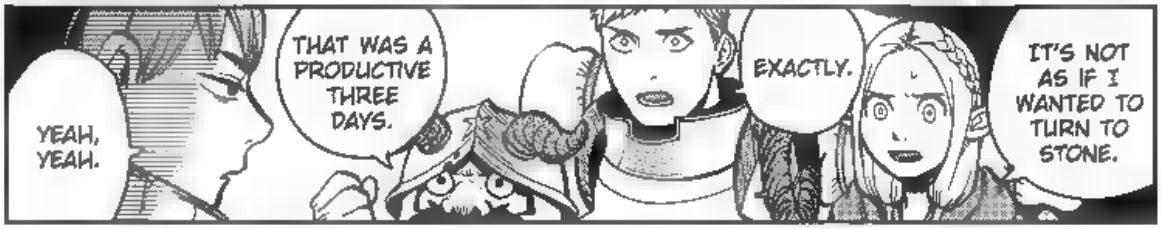
WOR

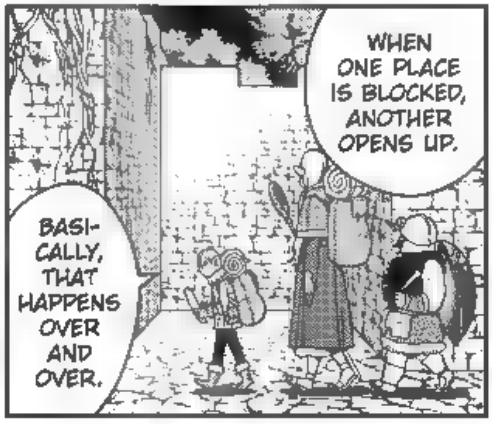
Printed in the United States of America

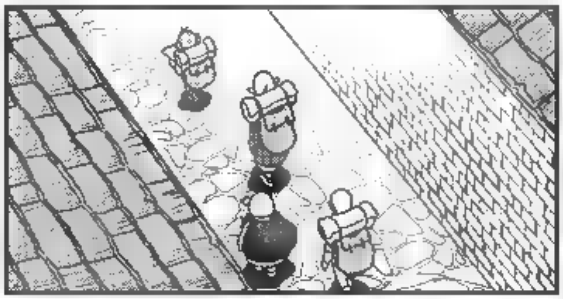
35. Cleaners

WHILE YOU PEOPLE WERE MESSING AROUND...
...TURNING TO STONE, GETTING NOSEBLEEDS, AND HUNTING FOR FOOD...
—I'VE IDENTIFIED SEVERAL PATTERNS BEHIND THE CHANGES IN THE DUNGEON.

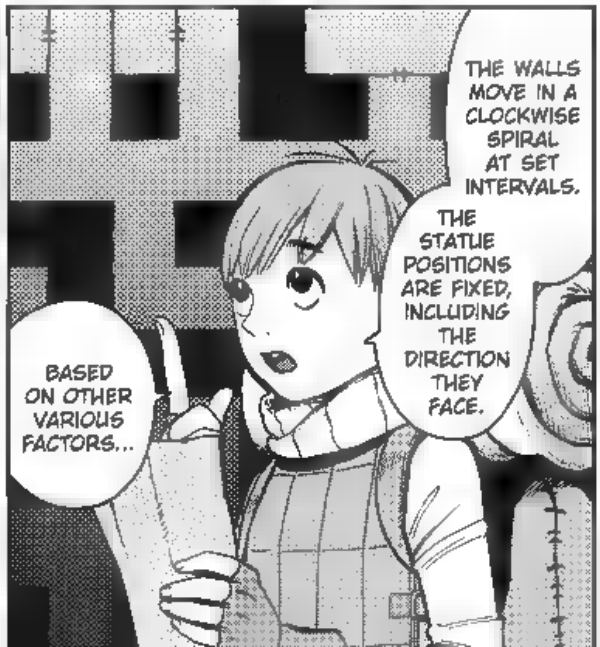

IT'S NOT AS IF I WANTED TO TURN TO STONE.
EXACTLY.
THAT WAS A PRODUCTIVE THREE DAYS.
YEAH, YEAH.

THE NUMBER OF DOORS, FURNITURE, AND BUILDING TYPES DOESN'T CHANGE.
HOUSES DON'T TURN INTO GRAVEYARDS.
BEHIND THAT HOUSE WE FOUND WITH SEVEN BATHROOMS, THERE MUST HAVE [redacted] SIX HOUSES WITH NO BATHROOMS.


WHEN ONE PLACE IS BLOCKED, ANOTHER OPENS UP.
BASICALLY, THAT HAPPENS OVER AND OVER.

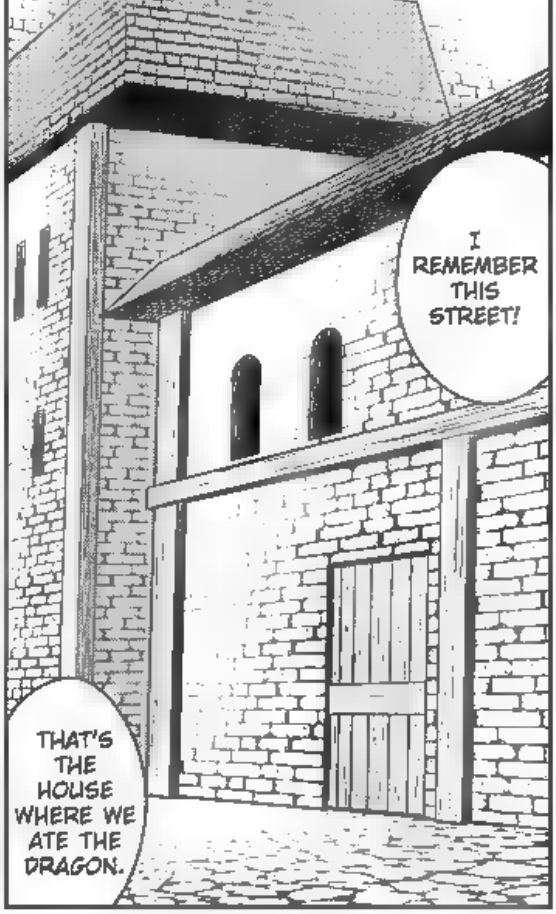


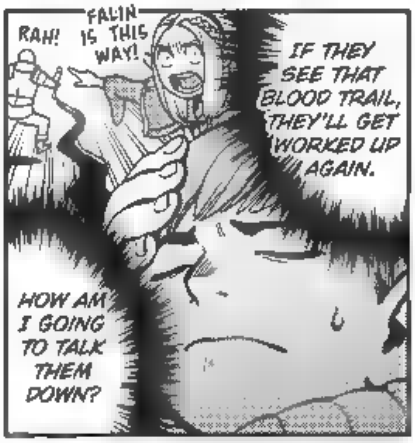
OH!


THE WALLS MOVE IN A CLOCKWISE SPIRAL AT SET INTERVALS.
THE STATUE POSITIONS ARE FIXED, INCLUDING THE DIRECTION THEY FACE.
BASED ON OTHER VARIOUS FACTORS...

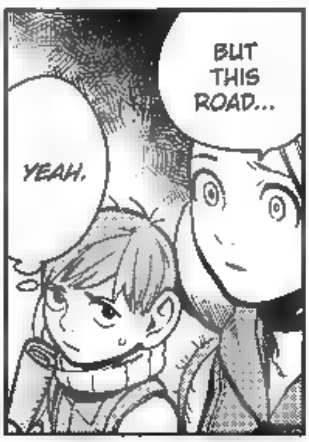
HEH-
WELL, THIS STUFF IS PART OF MY JOB.
CHIL-CHUCK, YOU'RE AMAZING !!

CUTIE!
BIG EARS.
CLEVER BOOTS!
YA LI'L GENIUS!

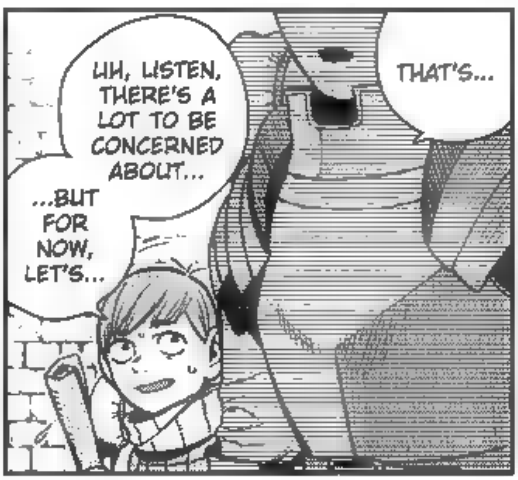

I REMEMBER THIS STREET!
THAT'S THE HOUSE WHERE WE ATE THE DRAGON.


RAH!
FALIN IS THIS WAY!
IF THEY SEE THAT BLOOD TRAIL, THEY'LL GET WORKED UP AGAIN.
HOW AM I GOING TO TALK THEM DOWN?

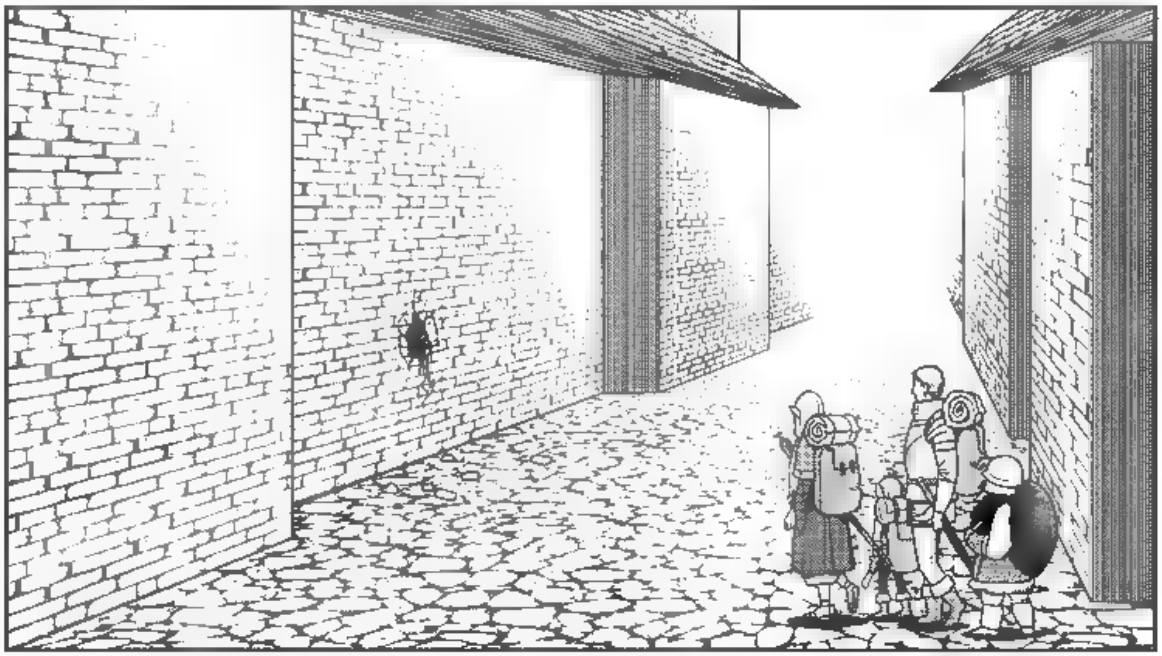
IT'S WHERE WE LOST FALIN.
ONLY A POOL OF BLOOD WAS LEFT.


BUT THIS ROAD...
YEAH.

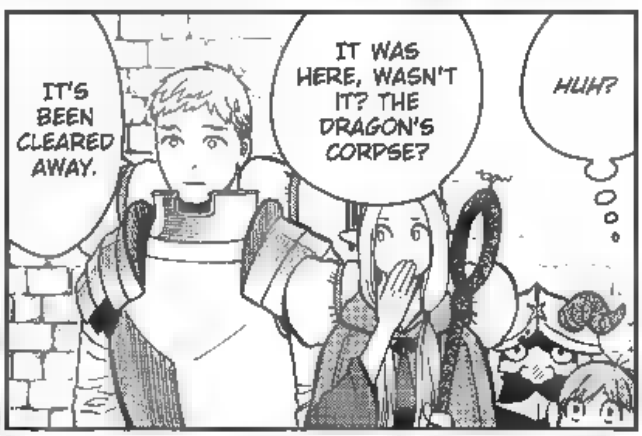
...GO BACK TO THE... SURFACE...


UH, LISTEN, THERE'S A LOT TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT...
...BUT FOR NOW, LET'S...
THAT'S...

GIKU (FLINCH)
LAIOS, LOOK.



I'M SURE THAT CRACK IN THE WALL IS FROM WHEN THE DRAGON FELL, THOUGH.
IT'S ALMOST CLOSED TOO...


IT'S BEEN CLEARED AWAY.
IT WAS HERE, WASN'T IT? THE DRAGON'S CORPSE?
HUH?

THE MAGI-CIAN'S EYES ARE COMING.

HUH?
I JUST SAW...
DON'T YELL LIKE THAT!

WAUGH!!
ZLISAA (GOLD)
YEEP!

EVER SINCE THEN, EVERY SO OFTEN I HEAR THINGS.
AGAIN?
MANA SICKNESS AGAIN, I GUESS.

ばっ
BA (TURN)
YOU MEAN—

"THE MAGICIAN'S EYES ARE COMING."
THE MAGI-CIAN'S EYES...

YOU HEAR THINGS? I'M NOT SURE THAT'S MANA SICKNESS.
WHAT DID YOU HEAR?

PATATA (FLUTTER)

C'MON, MARCILLE, WE'RE RUNNING!
...NO.
WE HAVE TO HIDE.
NO, WE CAN'T.
THIS PLACE IS TOO OPEN.
...WING-BEATS!
ONE OF THOSE SMALL WYVERNS !!
BATA (KICK)
JITA (FLAIL)
JITA
...IN THE WALL!!
BWFF!
BITTAN (SMACK)
WE'LL HIDE ...
HUH?
PATA (FLUTTER)
WHAT'S THIS...?
MORE MAGIC, HM...?
COME ON, YOU TWO! HURRY!
OKAY...

PATATA
DOBAA (BLORP)
BLEHHHH!
BWAAAH!
MARCILLE, WHAT WAS THAT SPELL?
DERO (COOL)
HAFF... HAFF...
BOTA (PLOP)
HAKH...

THAT'S RIGHT.
DUNGEON CLEANERS.
THEY'RE CREATURES THAT CLEAN UP DEBRIS IN THE DUNGEON AND REPAIR PLACES THAT GET DESTROYED. RIGHT?
I THOUGHT IT PROBABLY WASN'T SET COMPLETELY YET.

WHAT?
..... CLEANERS ?

LOOK. THEY'VE EVEN RECREATED WEAR FROM AGE AND FINE SCRATCHES.
THE FLOOR TOO!
YOU CAN'T TELL WHICH IS WHICH BY SIGHT.

...AND THE CLEANERS START HERE!
MUNI
MUNI (SQUISH)

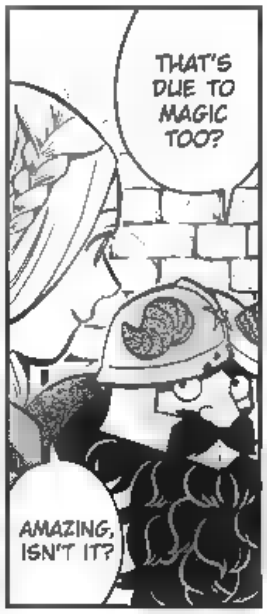
SAWA (FEEL)
SAWA
さわ
さわ
THIS PART IS THE OLD WALL....

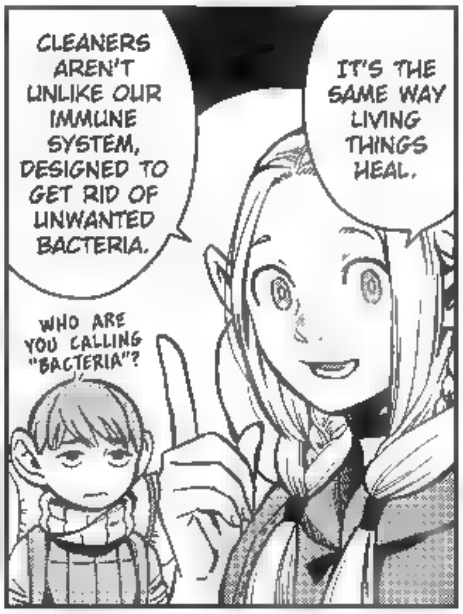
THERE ARE TINY THINGS CRAWLING ALL OVER THE FLOOR!
GROSS!

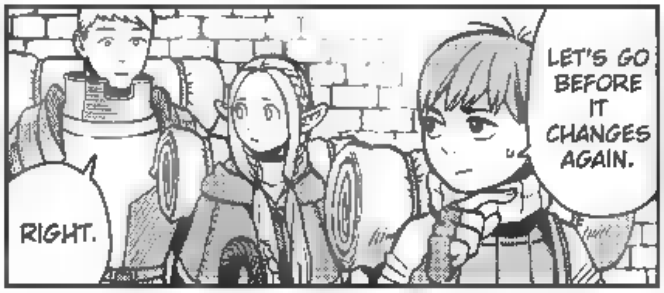
ZOWA
ZOWA
ZOWA (SLITHER)
GEH!

WELL, THEY BREAK DOWN ANYTHING THEY THINK IS IN THE WAY.
SHOO!
SHOO!
THEY PROBABLY CAME TO EAT THE DRAGON'S CORPSE AND THE RUBBLE FROM THE EXPLOSION.
EEEK!
THEY'RE NOT MONSTERS. THEY'RE HARMLESS.
THEY'RE ALL CLEANERS.
A DUNGEON WITHOUT THEM WOULD COLLAPSE RIGHT AWAY.
NO, THEY'RE NOT. THESE CRITTERS CHEW ON MY TENT A LOT.
HA HA.
THEY AREN'T PICKY. THEY'LL EAT ANYTHING, ORGANIC OR NOT.
THEN THEY START TO EAT THE GARBAGE IN THE AREA.
WHEN EXPLOSIONS DAMAGE THE DUNGEON, THEY APPEAR.
THEIR SECRETIONS PREVENT COLLAPSE AND KEEP FIRES CONTAINED.
DONE.
...RETURNING THE DUNGEON TO ITS ORIGINAL FORM.
FINALLY, THEY SECRETE A LIQUID THAT FILLS IN MISSING PIECES...

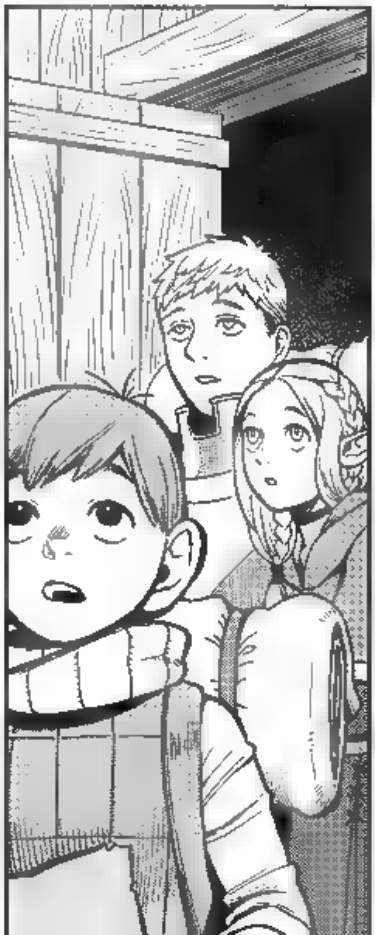
FOR CRIPES' SAKE... WHAT'S NEXT, A MAGIC DIGESTIVE SYSTEM?
IN THAT CASE, I WONDER WHAT THE DUNGEON WOULD EAT.
HA HA!

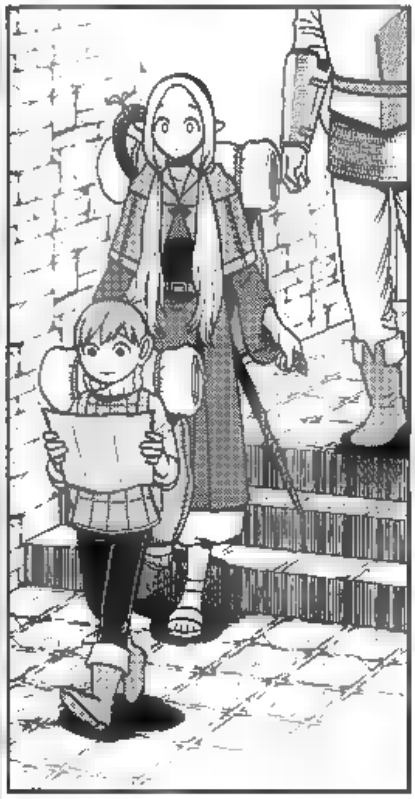

THAT'S DUE TO MAGIC TOO?
AMAZING, ISN'T IT?

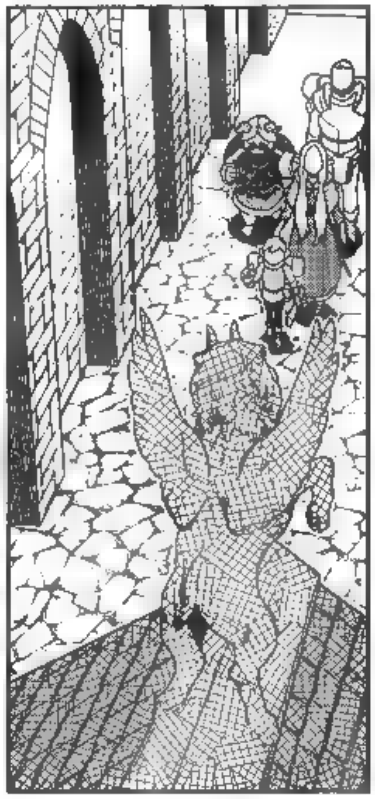

CLEANERS AREN'T UNLIKE OUR IMMUNE SYSTEM, DESIGNED TO GET RID OF UNWANTED BACTERIA.
IT'S THE SAME WAY LIVING THINGS HEAL.
WHO ARE YOU CALLING "BACTERIA"?

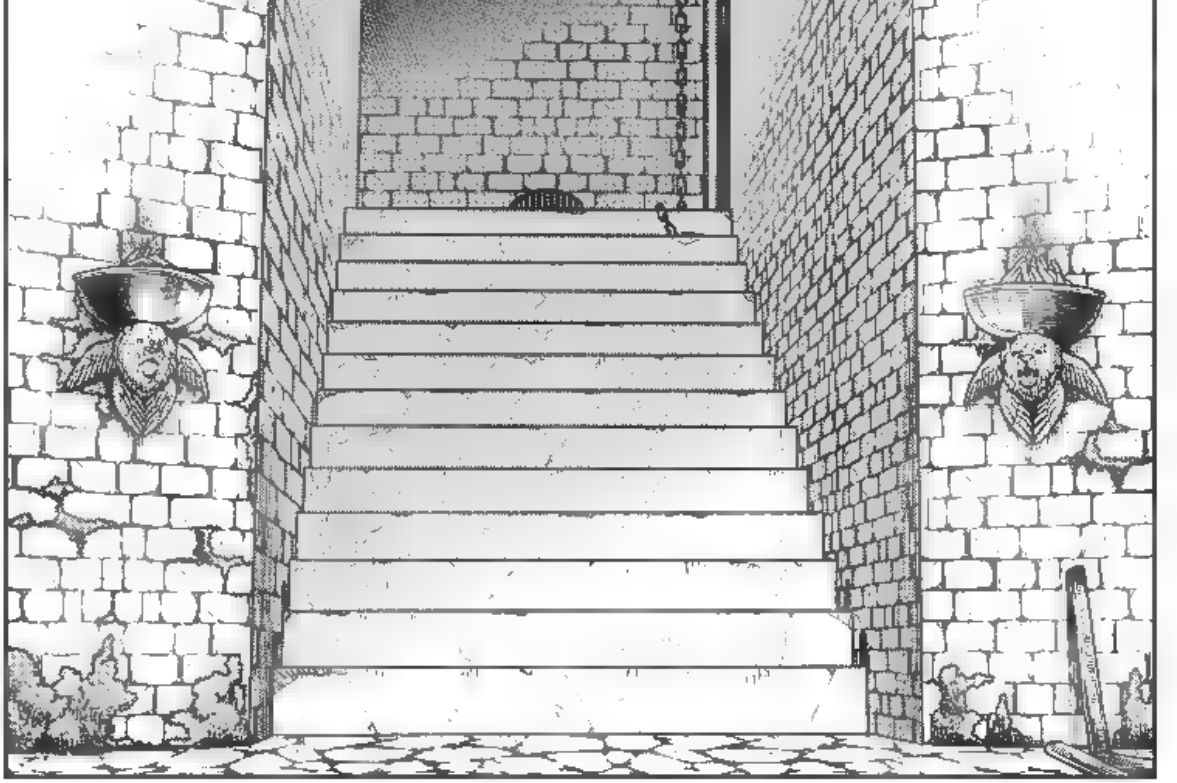

LET'S GO BEFORE IT CHANGES AGAIN.
RIGHT.

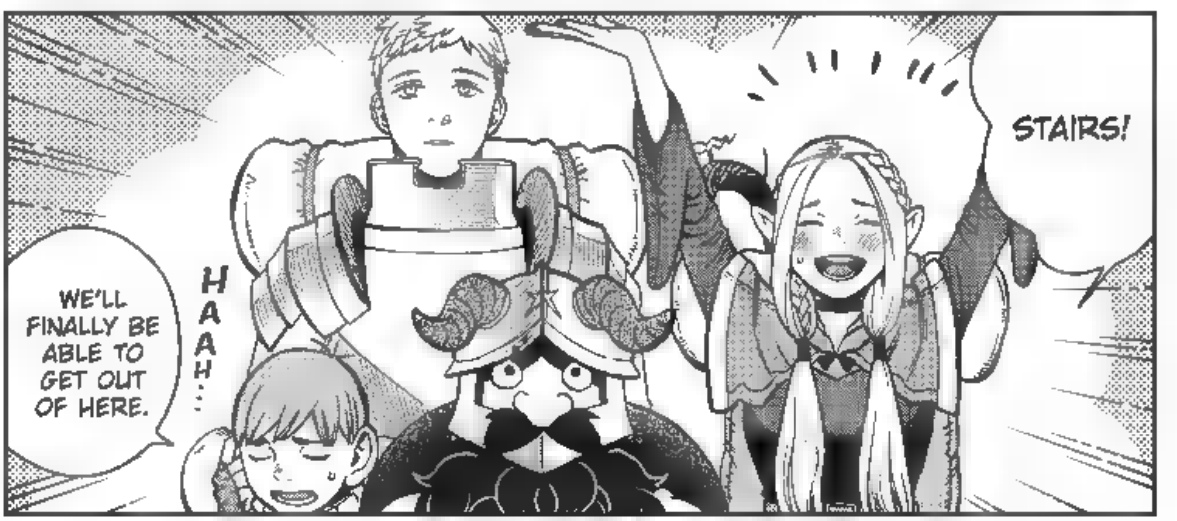
I'M LUCKY THAT BLOOD TRACK'S GONE.
PHEW...



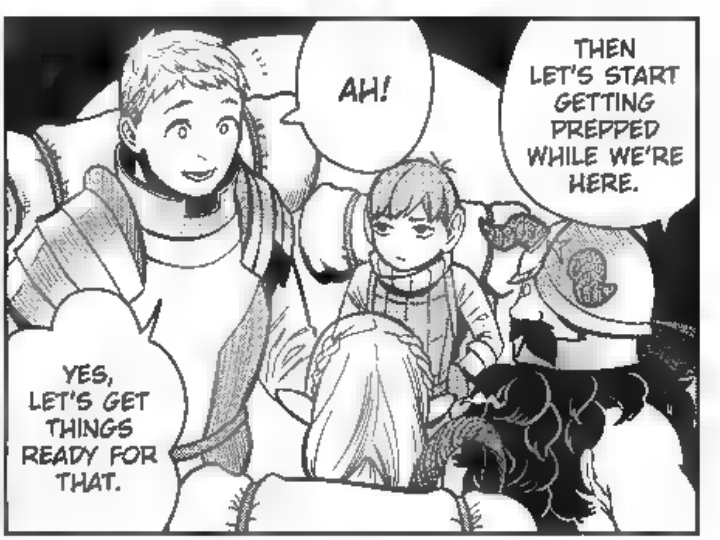




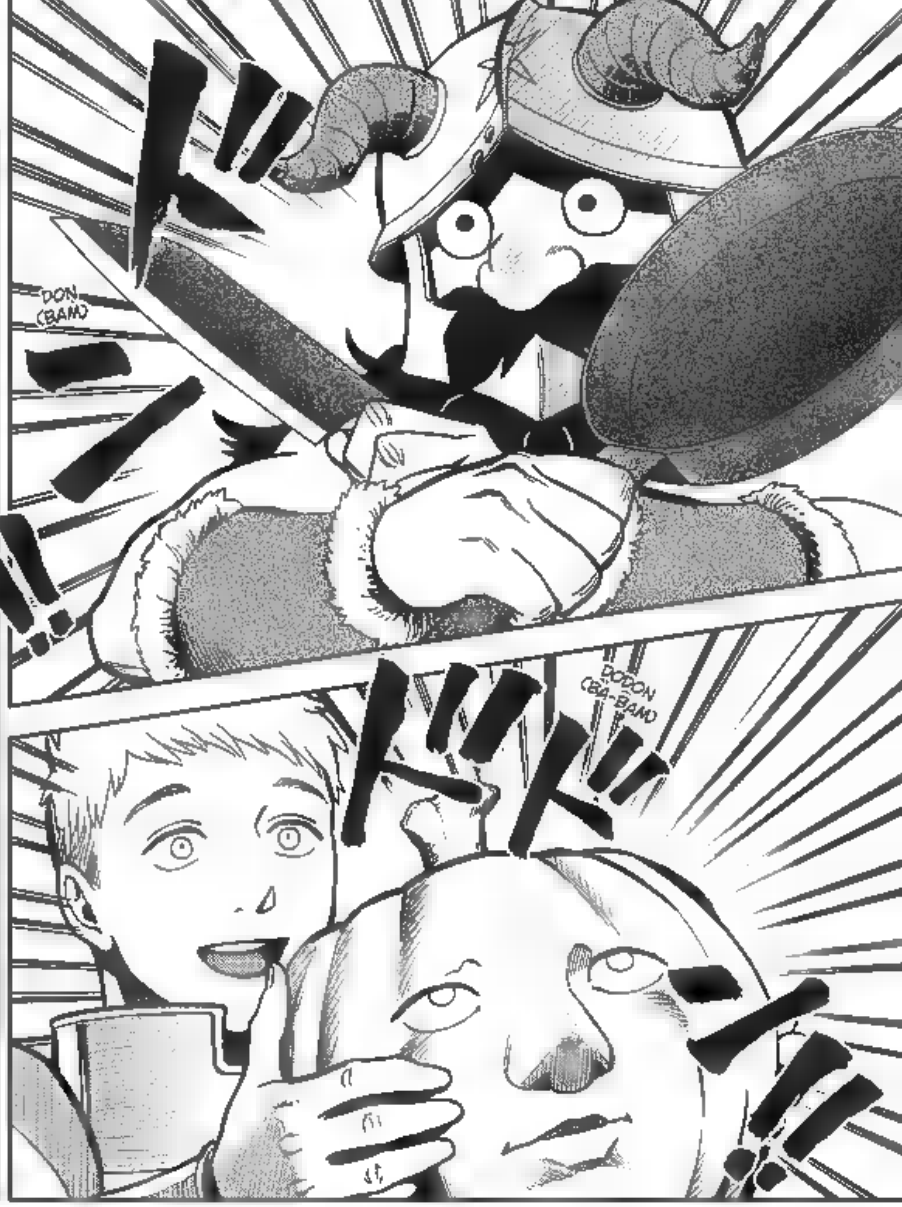



STAIRS!
WE'LL FINALLY BE ABLE TO GET OUT OF HERE.
HAAH...

"THAT"...
I SEE... "THAT," HUH?


AH!
THEN LET'S START GETTING PREPPED WHILE WE'RE HERE.
YES, LET'S GET THINGS READY FOR THAT.

DOOON (BOOOM)


DON (BAM)
DODON (BA-BAM)

FOOD.
OKAY! FOOD.
YOU ACTUALLY LIKE THAT THING, DON'T YOU?
I DO NOT!

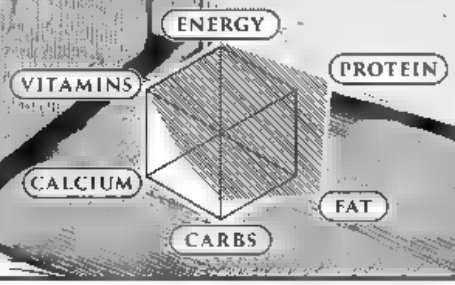
I DOUBT THERE ARE TENTACLES ON THESE STAIRS.
BEFORE CLIMBING A LONG STAIRWAY, WE SHOULD BUILD UP OUR STRENGTH.
HUH!? BY "THAT," YOU MEANT EAT!?
SAY THAT SOON-ER!!

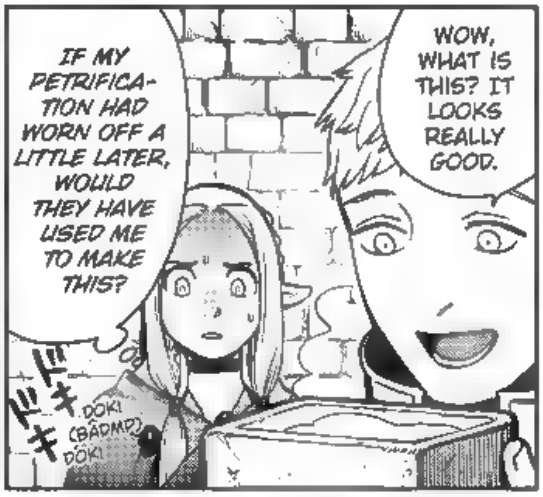
I KEPT IT IN RESERVE FOR WHEN OUR FOOD WAS GONE.
IS THAT THE STUFF WE FOUND ON THE THIRD FLOOR?
WE HAD SOME LEFT?
COOK SOME GRAIN.
...MAYBE I'LL USE THAT.
HM. WE HAVE SO MANY INGRE-DIENTS, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE.
HEAT IT, BRICK AND ALL.
SPREAD A LAYER OF GRAIN INSIDE A HOLLOWED-OUT BRICK...
...THEN ADD THE TOPPINGS.
CHOP UP GROUND COCKATRICE MEAT, DRYAD FRUIT, MANDRAKE ROOT AND LEAVES, AND THE LEAVES OF THE DEPET-RIFICATION HERB (?).
SEASON, THEN SAUTÉ.
FINALLY, ADD EGG SAUCE, AND...
TOROO (POURD)
A COCKA-TRICE EGG.
I BROUGHT IT ALONG, BUT IT'S AWKWARD TO USE.
HUHI? WHAT IS THAT THING!?
DOROO (GLORP)
THEN...
BIKU (FLINCH)

Cockatrice Stone-Baked Mother-and-Child Dish with Starchy Sauce

IT'S DONE!!

Ingredients
Cockatrice rib meat——200 g
Dryad fruit——As much as you like
Depetrification herb (not inspected)——As much as you like
Mandrake root and leaves——As much as you like
Barley——200 g
Cockatrice egg——70 ml
Seasonings——To taste



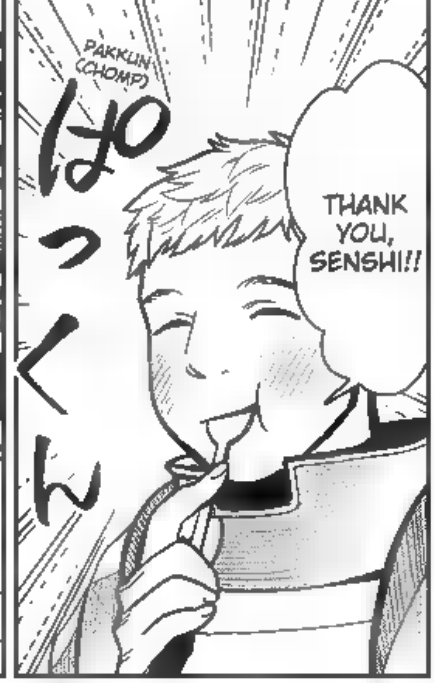


Stone-Baked Dish
(Serves 1)

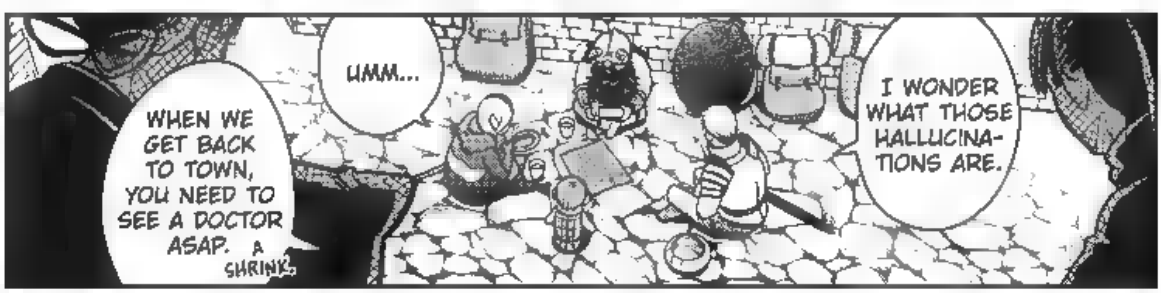
Ingredients
Dungeon cleaner secretions

MY FIRST IMPRESSION IS "DIRT."
FURTHER ASSESSMENT PUTS IT CLOSER TO A MAGICAL MIXTURE OF GREEN CATERPILLARS, IRON, AND LEMON...
YOU'RE COMPARING IT TO ALL SORTS OF OTHER THINGS.

...HOW DOES IT TASTE?


PAKKUN (CHOMP)
はっくん
THANK YOU, SENSHI!!

YOU'LL HEAR THINGS AND GET NOSEBLEEDS AGAIN.
YOU SURE YOU SHOULD BE EATING MAGICAL CREATURES?
じょり
JYORI (CRUNCH)
JYORI
じょり
THERE'S JUST NO WAY TO DESCRIBE IT.


WHEN WE GET BACK TO TOWN, YOU NEED TO SEE A DOCTOR ASAP.
A SHRINK.
UMM...
I WONDER WHAT THOSE HALLUCINATIONS ARE.

HM?

IS THIS A DISEASE...?
A DOCTOR!?
TON TON (TAP)

HMMMMMM!!?

UH, ACTUALLY ...

I...

I SEE IT.

GURU

GURU (TWIRL)

HUH!? AM I HALLUCI-NATING THIS TOO!?

CAN THE REST OF YOU SEE IT!?

...WE'RE UNDER ATTACK!

GIRI (SQUEEZE)
GIRI
GIRI
GIRI
GHK...

TSUU (SHF)
GH...

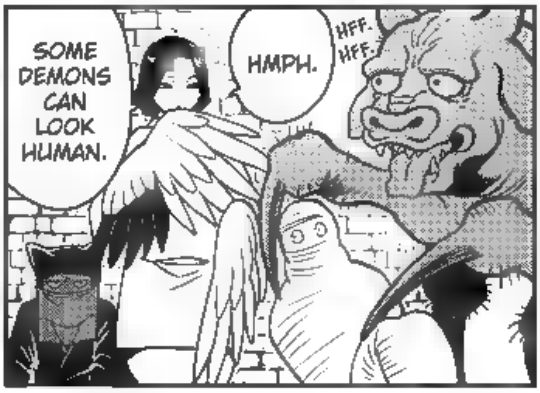
A CHILD...

THESE HORNS ARE JUST PART OF THE HELMET.

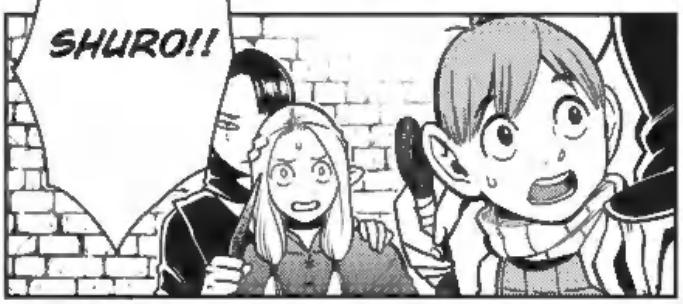
HM?
WHAT'S THIS? FROG SKIN?

STOP IT, MAIZURU.

THEY MAY SHOW THEIR TRUE NATURES...
...IF WE KILL ONE...


SOME DEMONS CAN LOOK HUMAN.
HMPH.
HFF. HFF.

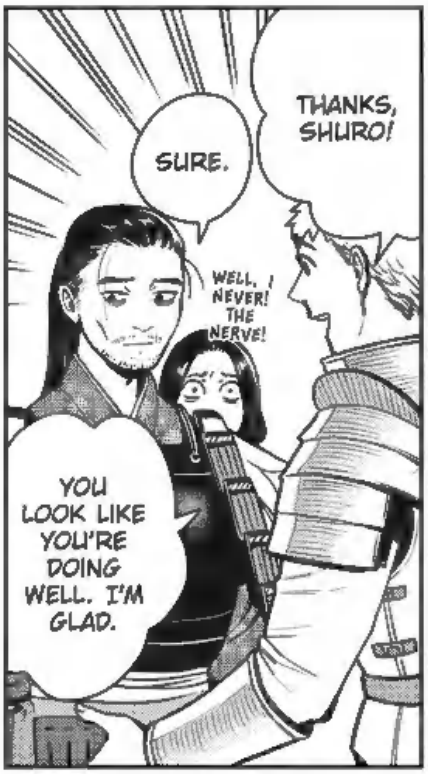
.....!
SHURO!!

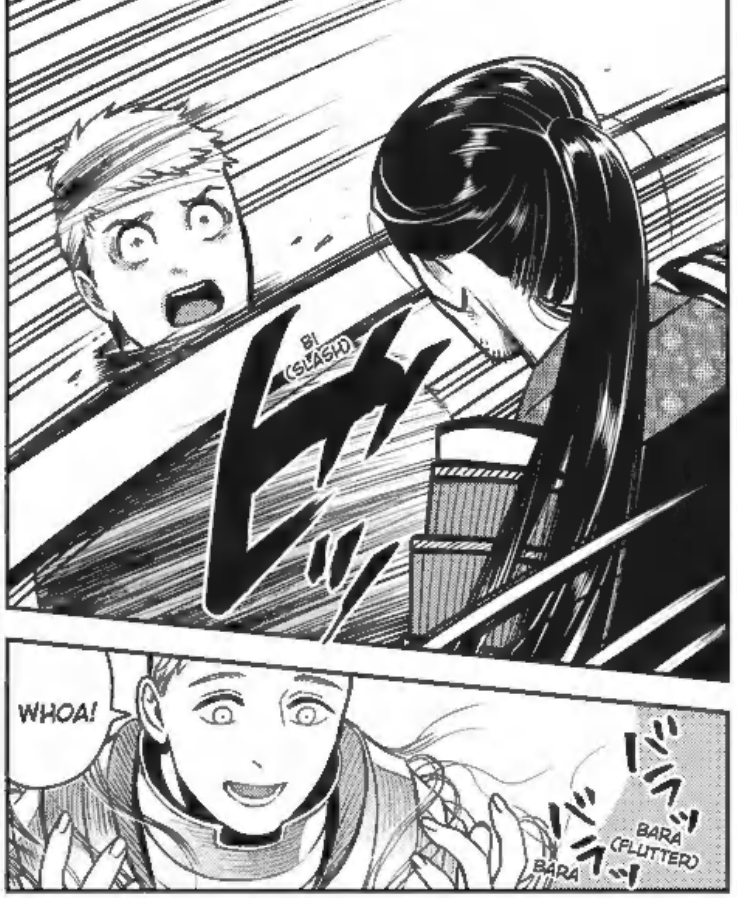

TOSCHURO...
IT'S PROBABLY YOUNG MASTER TOGHIRO.
WHAT'S A SHURO?

...I KNOW THEM.

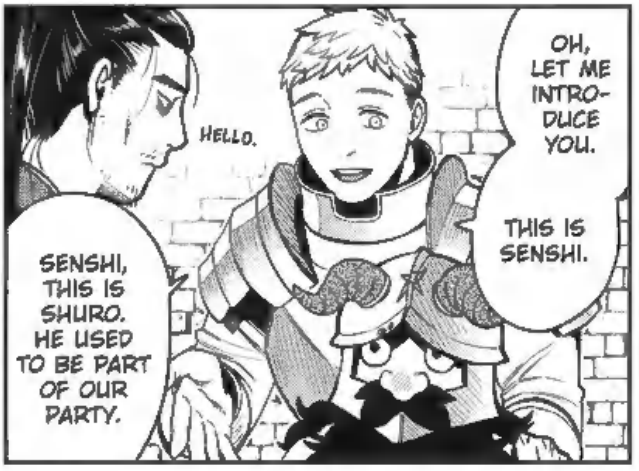
ピタ
PITA (STOP)

IMAGINE MEETING YOU HERE! IT'S GREAT TO SEE YOU.
BITTAN (FLOP)
びったん
WOW! SHURO! IT'S BEEN FOREVER!
びったん
BITTAN
HAVE YOU LOST SOME WEIGHT?
TCH!


THANKS, SHURO!
SURE.
WELL, I NEVER! THE NERVE!
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE DOING WELL. I'M GLAD.


BI (SLASH)
WHOA!
BARA (FLUTTER)
BARA

HA! HA! HA!
SHURO'S A GOOD GUY WITH SERIOUS SKILLS.
HE'S ABOUT THE ONLY PERSON WHO'D CALL ME A FRIEND.

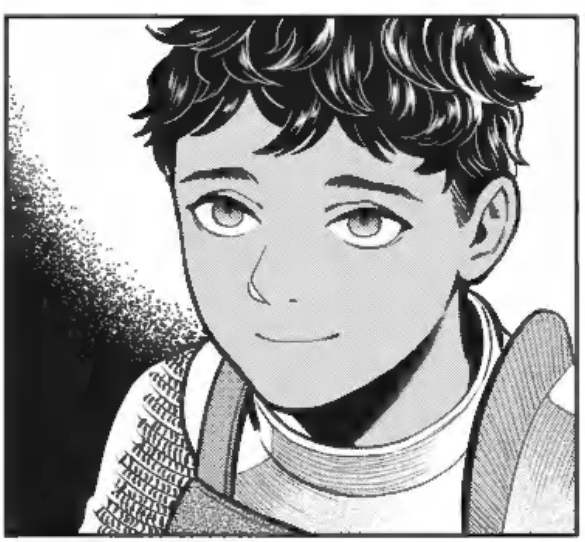

OH, LET ME INTRO-DUCE YOU.
THIS IS SENSHI.
HELLO.
SENSHI, THIS IS SHURO. HE USED TO BE PART OF OUR PARTY.

ZURARI (CROWD)
YOUR FRIENDS TOO. THEY CAN...
WOW! YOU'VE GOT A REALLY BIG GROUP!

LET'S NOT STAND AROUND TALKING. WANT TO SIT?
WE WERE JUST EATING.

...SAY, KABRU.
ISN'T THAT...?

MY NAME IS KABRU.
IT'S GOOD TO MEET YOU...
YOU'RE LAIOS, AREN'T YOU?



HM? YES, THAT'S ME.
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU.

To be continued...